Encounter

Germany

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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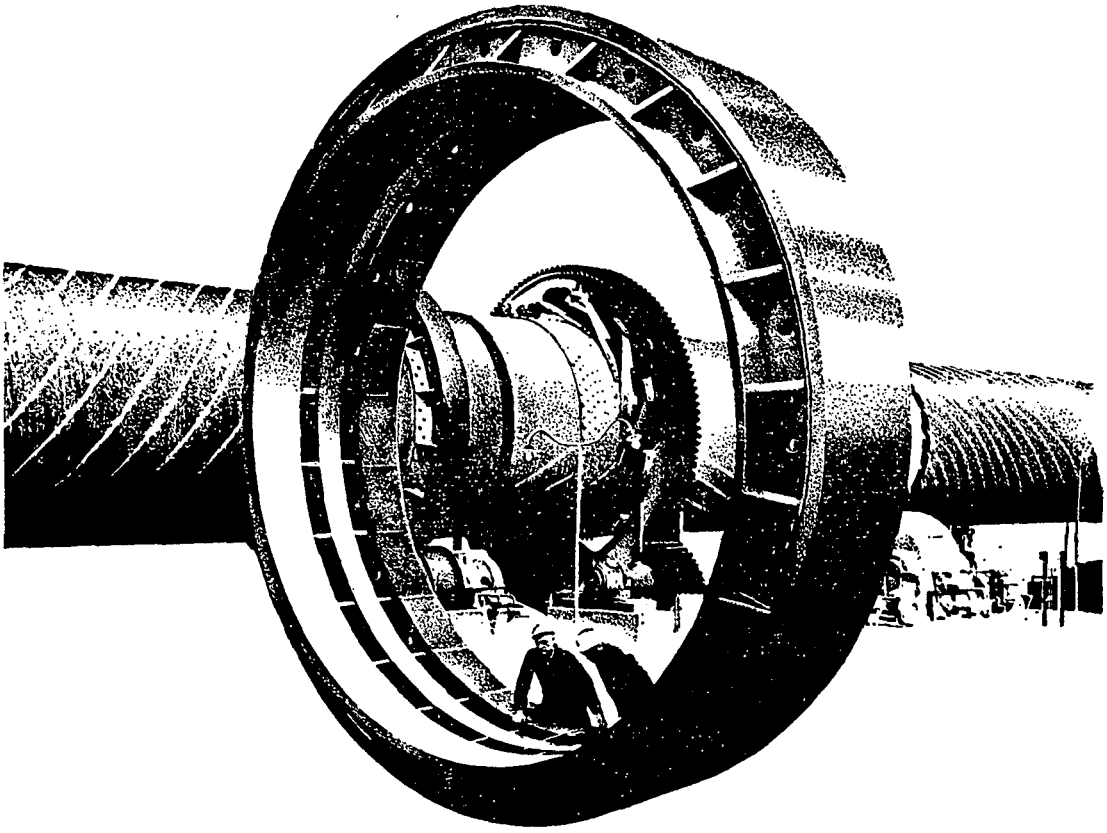

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THOMAS MANN · Briefe 1889-1936

Edited by Erika Mann · 584 pp

THOMAS MANN · Briefe 1937-1947

Edited by Erika Mann · 740 pp.

The letters are addressed to: Theodor W. Adorno, Julius Bab, Albert Bassermann, Bertolt Brecht, Hermann Broch, Jean Cocteau, Albert Einstein, Lion Feuchtwanger, Gottfried Bermann Fischer, Sigmund Freud, Albrecht Goes, Oskar Maria Graf, Ernst Heimeran, Hermann Hesse, Erich von Kahler, Annette Kolb, Joachim Maass, Alma Mahler-Werfel, Erika, Golo, Heinrich and Klaus Mann, Ludwig Marcuse, Agnes E. Meyer, Walter von Molo, Alfred Neumann, Heinz Politzer, Emil Preetorius, Ernst Reuter, Jules Romains, Eleanor Roosevelt, Max Rychner, René Schickele, Dolf Sternberger, Fritz Strichh, Bruno Walter, Franz Werfel, Kurt Wolff, Stefan Zweig, and others.

Young Authors

Ilse Aichinger · Mattias Braun · Paul Celan
Klaus Demus · Hilde Domin · Herbert Heckmann
Peter Huchel · Christoph Meckel · Christa Reinig
Paul Schallück

Neue Rundschau · A Quarterly · Founded by S. Fischer in 1890 — Fischer Paperbacks — Welt im Werden — Fischer Bücherei — Das Fischer Lexikon — Exempla Classica

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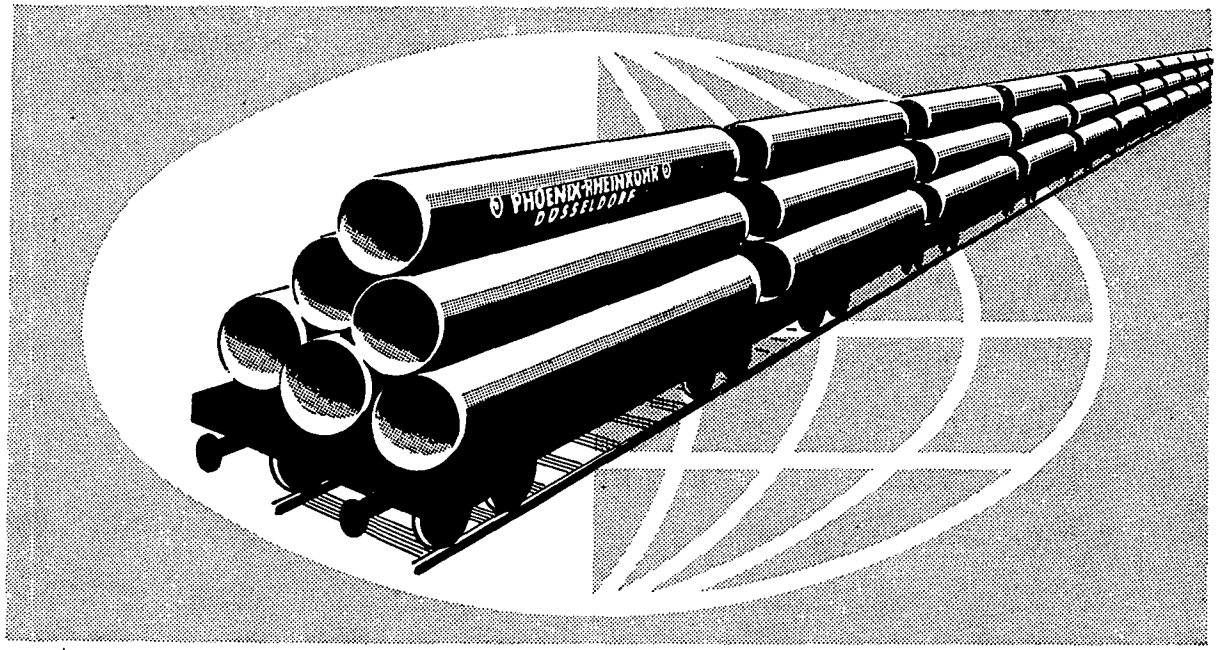

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A Special Number

Germany

A Foreword

DO YOU HATE the Russians, or despise the Americans, or loathe the Germans? Who adores the Italians? Do you find the French charming, repulsive, decadent? And the Laputans—dangerous? And the Yahoos—the last best hope of mankind?

How stale are all the simple-minded stereotypes that have coarsened our times! Yet they have contributed to the subversion of the fine old notion that with the progress of modern thought and ideals men would be able to live more peaceably and co-operatively with one another. The very banality of good-will these days makes for its undoing. Prejudice alone seems to offer passionate fulfilment; neither great literature nor great politics are ever made out of good sentiments.

Of the powerful political emotions that have divided the West, anti-Americanism (at least in this country) appears to be largely burnt-out. But anti-Germanism is not. Only this month, a prominent American authoress, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, could argue: "...Germans trained in obedience and dedicated to moral whitewashing are not a new people, nor are they reliable partners for anyone else....No one seems to notice that peaceful Germany is the one great obstacle to peace in Europe....It is worth remembering that the German national anthem is, as before, *'Deutschland über Alles.'* ...Germany merely changes its leaders, not its character....Germans should not be outraged by the Wall; they built similar walls everywhere in Europe not too long ago...." Nor is this hard-hearted, empty-souled cant confined to superficial journalism. A distinguished English historian, in a scholarly work, writes: "The most dangerous moment came when the small group of Germans in the colony conspired, characteristically, to betray it. They surreptitiously smuggled weapons to the natives and hoped to betray the colony to Spain. Equally characteristically, they got what was coming to them: a brace who got away to Powhatan had their brains beaten out for their treachery to the English...." Thus Dr. A. L. Rowse, explaining *sine ira et studio* the Indian difficulties of the first Jamestown settlement in Virginia in the year 1609.

BUT THE ESSENCE of nations and peoples has proved to be the most volatile and eccentric element in human history, and those who try to hold fast to some notion of national character find themselves deceptively dealing with the last stereotype but one. The kindly last-century image of "our German cousins" gave way to the bitter modern view of "the incorrigible Teuton." Perhaps they will always be with us, the Germanophiles and the Germanophobes, telling us constantly about the glories of Goethe or the horrors of Hitler, about the curse of a people doomed to militarism and worse or the promise of a *Kultur* and a *Geist* that have lived so intimately with genius.

The trouble with the anti-Germans is that for all their soaring concern for what looms as deviant and dangerous, they seem constitutionally unable to like a German book, admire a German idea, or to have a German friend. The trouble with the pro-Germans is that for all their decent open-heartedness to strangers and foreign things, they are difficult to rouse to a sense of anger or dismay at a return of a shabby Nazi, at some outburst of Teutonic gaucherie, or the recurring spectacle of *deutsche Sturheit* (or bloody-mindedness).

Both are one-note extremists—narrow or naïve, cynical or uncritical. Neither, it seems to us, is

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useful or relevant in our present time, which calls possibly more than any age before us for the simple exercise of intellect (and not merely on the part of the intellectuals). It calls for the suspension of ideological temptations and emotional simplicities; and in their place, a modest effort in curiosity, tolerance, reasonableness, and human sympathy. For this side of the airy horizons of the *terribles simplificateurs* lie real and earthier tasks—of creating generous, humane, and knowledgeable intellectual relations with other cultures. And more than that: helping to work out the cosmopolitan bases for a world-order that would be more vital, and more neighbourly. Goethe, who was so distressed by the spectacle of his countrymen, once tried to explain his quest "for the *allgemein Menschliche*, for the sense of universal humanity which is to be found in so many different forms all over the earth . . . and which I hoped to find, recognise, or stimulate in my own country." He thought, or perhaps only hoped, that it might be "the destiny of the Germans to become representatives of a new world citizenship." Is this not, rather, the destiny of all the Europeans, of mankind itself?

We like to think that the present moment in Anglo-German relations or, more meaningfully, in the whole relationship between Germany and the Atlantic West, is a point of no return; "no return," that is, to the political aberrations (always accompanied by intellectual corruption and disgrace) of the past. We offer the present number in that spirit.

M. J. L.

Unterschiede

Betrübt höre ich einen Namen aufrufen:
Nicht den meinigen.

Aufatmend
Höre ich einen Namen aufrufen:
Nicht den meinigen.

Differences

Distressed, I hear a name called out:
Not mine.

Relieved,
I hear a name called out:
Not mine.

Günter Kunert
translated by Michael Hamburger

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Goronwy Rees

Diary

From Berlin to Munich

THE PLANE descending passed through a thick belt of cloud and then I was on the Tempelhoferfeld, a victim once again of that sense of *déjà vu* which always attacks me in Germany; it is a land of ghosts which have never been exorcised.

On the aerodrome I was immediately confronted by a very potent and solid ghost; the huge reception hall built by Hitler in his best hygienic-Egyptian style, marble-faced, ascetic, dull and grandiose and now far too large for the traffic of West Berlin. Hitler's spirit still haunts the hall; but at the exit, as if to reassure me, I was immediately faced by the curious monument, a shallow curve of concrete, which commemorates the victims of the Berlin airlift. One would have liked to think that the one monument cancelled the other, but things do not work quite like that in Berlin. I had to remind myself that the victims of the airlift were killed, not by Hitler, but by quite a different enemy. In between, things had changed.

That was the trouble. Things are always changing in Germany, so that with the best will in the world one has to accept the situation at any given moment as provisional; there is always an alternative round the corner. The West Berliners accept this as one of the fundamental conditions of life, with an astonishing combination of fortitude, humour and cynicism. The truth is, they love their city, even if only half of it is now available to them, with a love which few Germans have for any of Germany's existing institutions.

Berlin

THIS IS NOT surprising. Berlin is still the greatest industrial city in Germany, but it has also preserved that air of *rus in urbe*, of the countryside encapsuled in the town, which, together with its marvellous climate, has always made it one of the most agreeable cities one could live in. Its built-up area covers only a third of the city; another third consists of parks, rivers, lakes, woods and forests; a fifth is actually farmland.

Even so, the strain of permanently teetering on the brink, as they do in West Berlin, the claustrophobia of living within such narrow limits, have their effects. In the streets people look tired, they move slowly, like old people; and indeed they are old, the elderly and middle-aged predominate, there is a large gap in the age-group from thirty to fifty, and few signs of that accent on youth, that dominance of the teen-ager, which is so evident in other European cities.

In the centre of West Berlin, on the Kurfürstendamm, stands the shell of the *Kaiser-Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche*; it is almost the only memorial left of those ruins in which, in 1945, girls and boys, pimps and black marketeers, used to offer their bodies or their services in return for a chocolate ration. The wreck of its great neo-Romanesque spire, which once dominated the Berlin landscape, stands out like the stump of a broken tooth; it has a queer beauty it never had when it was whole.

After the war, the Lutheran Church wished to demolish the ruins and build a new church in their place. But the people of Berlin, of whatever faith or none, loved the *Gedächtniskirche*, even in ruins, and insisted that they should be preserved. The Lutheran Church, very naturally, did not wish to worship God in a ruin; so on the same island site they have erected a new church, a squat, flat-roofed, octagonal building made of latticed panels of roughcast concrete, whose interstices are filled with stained glass

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that glows with a sombre purple colour. It looks like a smouldering beehive.

These two churches, the old and the new, as different as the Germany of the Kaiser and the Germany of Adenauer, now compose one of the most curious and interesting historical monuments that can be seen in any city. At night, the purple glass of the new church, held in its heavy framework of steel and concrete, seems to glow all the more richly and darkly by contrast with the brightly flashing neon signs that blink and dazzle around the Zoo station.

But indeed, all over West Berlin one finds buildings which by their spirit of innovation and experiment put the property speculators of London to shame; and not only them, but the cities of West Germany also, which have made very poor use, architecturally, of the opportunity with which they were presented after the war, when it became possible to rebuild themselves *de novo* out of their ashes.

One of the most remarkable of these new buildings is the Congress Hall built by the American architect, Stubbings, in conjunction with a team of German colleagues. Its roof, if it can be called a roof, consists of two huge curved wings of concrete, that seem to belong to an aeroplane rather than a building; they touch the ground only at the furthest tips of the great arc which joins them, and under their protection nestle the conference rooms and exhibition galleries and restaurants of the interior. Seen from the *S-Bahn*, Berlin's overhead railway, the Congress Hall looks as if it were already airborne and might at any moment soar into the sky like some huge bird.

The Congress Hall stands in the *Hansaviertel* where, at the invitation of the Berlin Senate, the best architects of every country have contributed to create an entirely new living quarter which, it is hoped, will attract to West Berlin musicians, artists, and writers from all over Germany and from abroad. It is part of a deliberate and imaginative effort to make of West Berlin a centre of humane culture that, one day, when conditions are more propitious, will provide Germany with the intellectual and cultural capital which to-day she so sorely needs and lacks. To visit the *Hansaviertel* is like walking through some green and airy gallery in which one can see and study every individual style and conception of which modern architecture is capable, and its effect is very much what Berenson would have called life-enhancing. But perhaps its most beautiful building of all is yet to come, when Mies van der Rohde's designs and plans for a national art gallery will have been executed; and this would indeed be appropriate, because van der Rohde himself has claimed Berlin's early nineteenth-century architect Schinkel as his own best master.

The Wall

THE HANSA QUARTER is a bright vision of what one day Berlin might be, but of course it is a provisional and precarious one, and Berlin promptly offers a new architectural feature, *Die Mauer*, The Wall, which presents a very ugly alternative to such hopes.

The Wall is a kind of masterpiece of the squalid, the cruel, and the hideous, the most naked assertion one could find anywhere that life was not intended to be anything except nasty, brutish and short. It is quite incredibly ugly, being built out of a kind of porous concrete brick that is altogether greyer, darker, deader, less responsive to light and shade than any material has any right to be. It is crowned by a *cheval de frise* of rusty barbed wire, erected in such a way that it is effective, not for keeping people out, but only for keeping people in, as if they were cattle.

To its ugliness, The Wall adds a maniacal ingenuity. Buildings present bare, blocked faces, so that no one may escape through them; others have been destroyed, trees cut down, areas evacuated, so as to ensure that, on the Eastern side, nothing shall obstruct a free field of fire on The Wall. Firing points, observation posts, batteries of searchlights, loudspeakers, are mounted on roof tops, in windows or embrasures, and elaborately linked with each other, so that any movement towards The Wall can immediately be observed and brought to a halt. These precautions are directed as much against the watchers as the watched, and every guard comes himself under the observation and into the field of fire of other guards.

The porous grey concrete of The Wall is stained, on its Western side, by irregular white patches which mottle it like the symptoms of a disease; they seep through from the other side, which is white-washed so that any shadow of movement will show up against it. Beyond The Wall is a line of movable anti-tank obstacles; beyond them again, barriers painted red and white like customs posts. Between these barriers and The Wall lies the *Todeszone*, or *Vernichtungszone*, the zone of death or destruction, in

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which the guards have orders to liquidate immediately anyone who does not halt after a warning shot.

At one point, the grey concrete is continued by the high red brick wall of a cemetery; here the pavement on the Western side is littered with withered wreaths, bunches of flowers. Relatives have tried to fling them over The Wall to their dead who are buried on the other side. A check-point has been allotted where, on Thursday afternoons, East and West exchange corpses of the dead who had expressed the wish to be buried with their families on the other side of the city. At other points are little shrines, plain wooden crosses surrounded by wreaths of flowers, in memory of those who have been destroyed as they tried to cross The Wall. And at others, things being as they are, are little centres of *tourisme*, where you can buy picture postcards, cigarettes, cups of coffee, ice-cream, souvenirs of The Wall and anything else a tourist may desire; for The Wall is something new, it's smart. It gives a genuine *frisson*. ("I love that Wall," said Mr. Khrushchev.) And here also one can mount the observation platforms which allow one to look over The Wall and gaze down the long, grey, infinitely dreary vistas of deserted and decaying streets leading into East Berlin; at any moment one expects to see the spy coming in from the cold.

THE YOUNG MAN who accompanied me was obsessed by The Wall, had studied every inch of it with the passionate minuteness of a *Kunsthistoriker*, knew every detail of its history and its tactical dispositions. I asked if his friends at the Free University felt as he did about The Wall. "Yes," he said. "You see, we had so many friends who came to the university from East Berlin. Now they can't come any more. And every night you can hear shots from the other side of The Wall. No one knows what has happened. We only know the names of those who have been destroyed on The Wall itself. What about those who never reached it?..."

Yet he was convinced that one day Berlin would again be the capital of a united Germany. He showed me the thousands of new trees that have been planted in the Tiergarten, the sites reserved for the government buildings, the foreign embassies. "It will be beautiful," he said with conviction. "My parents probably won't see it. But I will."

On the Other Side

I WENT TO East Berlin by the *S-Bahn* to the Friedrichstrasse station. It was like any journey by public transport in any city. Then at Friedrichstrasse I descended the steps into the entrance hall and was suddenly transplanted into Kafkaland.

In one of the underground passages a check-point had been established. It was shabby and clean, lit by naked electric light bulbs. Notices reminded one that East Berlin is the capital of the German Democratic Republic (just as West Berlin is *not* the capital of the German Federal Republic). Armed guards of the VOPO, the people's police, in their mauve fur hats, olive-green Russian-style uniforms, carrying carbines, machine pistols, revolvers, sauntered to and fro; they looked efficient and formidable, even if their armament seemed excessive for the job they had in hand.

Some fifty or sixty people were waiting, silently, patiently, submissively in the hall. Some were citizens of West Berlin or West Germany; some were citizens of East Germany; some like myself were foreigners; there were some Africans, a few Chinese. All had that beaten look of people who know there is nothing to do but wait, and that any attempt to expedite the process will only lead to trouble; after a time I found that I had begun to assume it myself. The East Germans manage to combine a Teutonic passion for bureaucracy with a Russian capacity for infinite delay.

I soon understood how they had learned that look, as of people for whom time had long ceased to have any object. Before I had passed through the check-point and succeeded in acquiring some East German marks (for one may not take a single *pfennig* of East German currency either into or out of East Berlin) my passport had been examined, carefully and minutely, seven times. Each time, VOPOS or customs officials studied every page with a look of frowning concentration which denoted that they were engaged on a task of supreme difficulty and importance, until at last I myself began to regard that document with a kind of awe and reverence which it had never inspired in me before. Every detail of every page of it was painstakingly recorded. When it was taken away from me to be processed in a kind of sealed chamber where it disappeared from sight entirely, I felt a sense of panic. As if I had suddenly been stripped of my identity and were condemned to linger for ever with the other

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nameless, faceless ghosts who waited so submissively in this limbo on the borderland between East and West.

Such fancies are not entirely absurd. In the bleak halls of the Friedrichstrasse the process of passing the check-point is conducted with such intense seriousness that at first one is inclined to laugh, as at some incident in *The Castle* or *The Trial*. But, just as in Kafka, there is something in the atmosphere, something threatening, which makes one feel that immense issues are at stake and that laughter might have appalling consequences.

The whole process lasted for me over two hours; I was then privileged to enter the capital of the German Democratic Republic. On the return journey it was complicated by several additional refinements of bureaucracy and lasted even longer. As I passed the check-point I picked up an official handout of a statement by Herr Ulbricht explaining that The Wall was essential to the defence of his decrepit empire. It appeared that others, abroad, agreed with him; *Unterhausabgeordneter der Labour Party* Richard Crossman was quoted as saying, with reference to The Wall: "A good thing... the best policy would be to recognise the D.D.R. and establish reasonable conditions of economic co-operation and political co-existence." William Callow, Lord Mayor of Coventry, was more explicit. "West Berlin is a powder barrel!" I wondered what strange dreams are bred these days in Coventry.

Berliner Ensemble

THE OBJECT of this painful journey had been to visit the charming little theatre on the *Schiffbauerdamm* in which, in its unchanged intimate atmosphere of a Victorian music-hall, the Berliner Ensemble nightly perform the works of Brecht. The performance that night was admirable, so good indeed that I was convinced once again that all the difficulties and problems of the famous *Verfremdungseffekt* dissolve and disappear when acted out upon the stage.

Yet that evening the performance, good as it was, seemed mysteriously to miss its mark. The audience was stolid, respectable, *kleinbürgerlich* to the last degree; they looked like an audience of suburban bank managers and their wives. Even the wildest and roughest knockabout of *Mahagonny* scarcely provoked a smile, much less laughter; it might have been Holy Writ. They listened to Brecht's poetry and prose as if its only object was to flatter their own complacency, not surprisingly perhaps, because they were read by Helene Weigel in tones of institutional piety which would have been well adapted to a reading of the devotional works of a dissenting sect.

I had known Brecht well once, for a short period before the war. I could not help wondering what he would have made of it all. In such a setting, even his own words seemed to become distorted into a parody of themselves.

In die Städte kam ich zu der Zeit der Unordnung
Als da Hunger herrschte.

To what cities of the Western world would such words better apply than to this capital of the German Democratic Republic? The truth is that here on the *Schiffbauerdamm* even Brecht's works seem to become infected with the universal spirit of hypocrisy and falsehood which rules in Eastern Germany. What marvellous targets Heine or Stendhal could have found in such a society!

Storm over Germany?

IN HAMBURG the air was soft, mild, dove-grey above the shining waters of the Alster; the new buildings on the far bank had a pearly tinge in the mist. I spent most of my time there talking to journalists, for Hamburg to-day is in a sense the capital of the Press in Germany. *Die Welt, Der Spiegel, Stern, Die Zeit*, unlike most German newspapers and periodicals, have a national circulation throughout Germany, and so far as there is such a thing as a genuine public opinion in Germany, they have an important part in forming it.

What form that opinion takes to-day is extremely difficult to say; only from my conversations I derived a distinct impression that a certain wind of change is beginning to blow through Germany. The Adenauer era confined German opinion in a straitjacket of what a German writer has somewhat brutally described as "Provincialism & the Cold War." Many Germans are beginning to react against both.

Herr Schröder, the German Foreign Minister, has just given somewhat enigmatic expression to such feelings. Germany, he says, is going through a "crisis of clarification," a "process of transformation" which requires "a change of awareness." When that comes, he says, "many withered leaves will fall, and the storm will rage mightily through the German house. We must make new efforts, perhaps more imagina-

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tive than will seem proper to some people at the present time."

These are dark sayings. What does Herr Schröder mean? He means, of course, if one were to put it bluntly, that West Germany may soon wish to revise her attitude and her policy towards the East; and if this is true, then indeed the storm will rage mightily, not only in Germany, but elsewhere, for it would imply a basic revision of all the principles on which Dr. Adenauer based his conduct of German affairs.

How far Herr Schröder is in advance of his time, or how far he misinterprets it, is impossible to say; but there are already plenty of people, who, for all the wonders of the economic miracle, feel a deep, if vague, uneasiness about the condition of Germany at the end of the Adenauer era. They believe that the division of Germany has had, and is having, deplorable effects both East and West and, like Herr Schröder, that "new efforts" must be made to overcome it, that a "more flexible approach" must be made to the problems of West Germany's relations with the Eastern Republic. They are deeply impressed by the effects of the opening of The Wall at Christmas, believe that the breach must be reopened, that this will lead to the removal of other barriers between East and West. They think that any form of contact between East and West, especially in cultural matters, is better than none, and that wherever the possibility of contact exists, it should be vigorously pursued. They believe that Dr. Adenauer's policy of alliance with France has been proved to be a failure, that it helps to perpetuate the division of Germany, and that if necessary it must be abandoned if it hinders the "forward movement" of German policy which Herr Schröder advocates.

Such ideas are in many cases vague and amorphous; they float in the air; and even those who hold them strongly hesitate to give them a precise or concrete form because they are not quite sure what their consequences might be in practice. And in some cases at least they are accompanied by what I take to be illusions; as for instance, the belief, or the hope, that East Germany, in return for recognition, might consent to some dismantling of Herr Ulbricht's odious régime. And there is evidence that such illusions, and others, are carefully nourished by the East.

One cannot say what progress such views have as yet made, or will make. They are part of a wider sense of dissatisfaction with the condition in which Germany finds herself to-day. If they were ever to capture a majority of the German people, their effects would be profound; and even the suggestion that Germany is in some way on the move again is enough to inspire some people with uneasiness and alarm.

Intellectuals

INTELLECTUALS suffer particularly from the sense that affairs in Germany have reached a kind of deadlock which must somehow be resolved. Partly this is a sense that the provincialism, the excessive federalisation, of German life has somehow had the effect of sterilising the creative spirit in the arts and in literature.

I asked two friends in Hamburg whom they considered to be the truly significant writers in Germany to-day. "There are certainly not more than three," one of them said. I asked who composed this trinity. "Günter Grass, certainly," he said. "He has a genuinely spontaneous and original imagination which is the rarest of all things in Germany to-day. And Ernst Jünger, who is one of the few great German prose stylists." And the third? "Perhaps there isn't a third," he said. My other friend did not disagree.

During my stay in Germany, this conversation repeated itself over and over again in various forms. There is a surprising unanimity that Grass is the most interesting and important writer Germany has produced for many years; perhaps this has been easier to arrive at because everyone also agrees that he is an exceptionally agreeable person. I heard only one slight note of dissent about his talent. "Apart from some young poets who can write admirable lyrics but nothing else," a critic said, "Grass is the best that we have. But if one reads him, as I did the other day, immediately after reading Thomas Mann, one sees immediately what an immense difference there is in the scale and scope of their talents. After all, the best book published in Germany last year was a volume of Thomas Mann's letters...."

There is a similar despondency about creative work in the theatre. The theatre flourishes in West Germany to-day, even in small provincial towns; it is subsidised on a scale, and producers and actors work under conditions, which might well make any Englishman envious. "Millions of marks have been poured into the

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theatre," said a dramatic critic; "yet we have no one who can write for it." I asked about Hochhuth's *The Representative*. He shrugged his shoulders. "How can one tell? It is a polemic, and I think a very good polemic. Also it is a scandal, and that is always a good thing. But it is impossible to see it in its entirety on the stage and every producer cuts it to suit his own prejudices. What we saw in Berlin was not Hochhuth; it was Piscator, just as *The Merchant of Venice* which you may see in Stratford this year (alas!) is also Piscator, and has nothing whatever to do with Shakespeare. Piscator turns it into a detailed economic analysis of the Jewish problem in Venice. He tells you exactly how many Jews lived there, and the Nazi-like social disabilities under which they suffered, and makes Shylock's demand for his pound of flesh a reprisal for being excluded from the Venetian shipping business! . . ."

Such conversations can be depressing; and they lead inevitably to discussions of the reasons why such a state of affairs should exist. Many are suggested: the division of Germany; the lack of a genuine capital; the Cold War, which condemns West Germany to provincialism; the elimination of the Jews; Germany's obsessive preoccupation with material interests. No doubt all of them contribute to the same end. But talking to my two friends in Hamburg it occurred to me that there might be at least one other reason. One of them came from East Prussia, from a great estate which is now in Russian hands, the other from Vienna, of mixed German-Hungarian-Italian stock, whose family had for centuries served the Hapsburgs as soldiers, administrators, and diplomats. Together they represented a part of the German heritage which has by now been completely destroyed, so that as a result the bloodstream of German intellectual life runs thinner, weaker, slower.

West Germany can survive and even prosper, economically and politically, in its amputated condition; it is doubtful whether a culture can survive so drastic a piece of surgery. But it is not only West Germany that suffers. Our own concept of Europe has also shrunk immeasurably. So many great cities, so many historic provinces, so many peoples have now been lost to Europe that she only survives as a fringe of the Atlantic. How much thinner is the blood that flows through her veins; how petty and small even General de Gaulle's most grandiose ambitions seem as compared with the community of ideas that once stretched from London to Warsaw.

The Good Soldier

AFTER BERLIN, after Hamburg, which are still great cities, Bonn seemed more than ever a village, a *Bundesdorf*. As the capital of a great country, it is quite simply ridiculous, and the presence of the government does nothing to change its stale provincial air except to make it seem even more oppressive. There is even a certain propriety in the scandals which from time to time convulse the political life of Bonn: where else does scandal prosper more than in a village?

One of the most recent scandals has arisen out of the methods of training and discipline applied by a parachute unit of the *Bundeswehr* stationed at Nagold. This has shocked public opinion, because of the efforts that have been made to ensure that the *Bundeswehr* should be purified of anything that might remotely resemble "Prussian militarism." Indeed these efforts have in general been so successful that some people wonder whether the *Bundeswehr* is not in fact an army of civilians rather than of soldiers and for that reason doubt its value as an effective fighting force.

"How do you make a good soldier?" one such said to me. He was slight and lean, crop-haired; he had that kind of hard agility which I at least associate with a certain kind of Prussian.

"It is first of all indispensable that he should be a master, if possible an artist, in the use of his weapons. He must, for instance, be able to occupy a position and bring his weapons into action just so much faster than the enemy that it is the enemy who is killed and not himself. This is a matter of technical skill, combined with an attitude of mind which is totally at variance with that of a civilian, for whom the question of killing or being killed rarely arises. How does one teach this skill and attitude to a recruit from civilian life?

"He may, like the French at Valmy, be inspired by revolutionary enthusiasm, but I can assure you that the *Bundeswehr* inspires very little enthusiasm of any kind, revolutionary or otherwise. He may, like the recruit in the old German army, have already been carefully indoctrinated, by tradition, by his parents, by the State, by the Church, by the village schoolmaster, with a sense that the military ideal of the good soldier is the highest thing in life;

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and also be assured that the good soldier is on the way to the commanding heights of power and social prestige. Nothing of this exists in the *Bundeswehr*. The recruit in civilian life has been taught to associate the idea of a soldier with the greatest and most shameful defeat in German history. Moreover, he is even in doubt whether the *Bundeswehr* has any function to perform in war. It exists only to defend the peace. If this fails, then the bombs will drop and everything will be over in half an hour. Paradoxically, the *Bundeswehr* is not a military but a diplomatic instrument. If diplomacy fails, it has no function.

"In these circumstances, why should the recruit learn the difficult and specialised techniques which make a good soldier? He can only be taught to reach the required standard by hard and severe training, and, men being what they are, failure to reach that standard must be appropriately punished. Our field regulations provide for such punishment. And they are not designed to humiliate or brutalise the soldier. They are meant to make him learn his job and, if properly applied, will help to do so.

"Whether they are so applied, depends primarily on the N.C.O., who was always the backbone of the German, as of any other army. Unfortunately, the *Bundeswehr* is desperately short of N.C.O.'s, and those we have are very often both inexperienced and incompetent. Many have been promoted before they have even finished their basic training. Therefore they do not have the authority which is necessary to train recruits, especially if, as often happens, the recruit is better educated than themselves. He sees through them.

"In such a situation the N.C.O. in desperation resorts to improper methods of punishment, to humiliation, to physical ill-treatment. The curious thing is that the recruit does not particularly resent this. He accepts it fatalistically as an inevitable part of army life. The most frequent grounds for complaint in the *Bundeswehr* are about food, leave and promotion—the kind of complaints one might expect from a shop steward in a factory. But recruits very rarely complain about physical ill-treatment, even in cases in which it is known to have occurred.

"But the case of Nagold is very interesting. The unit concerned were parachutists, and in all armies to-day parachutists regard themselves as élite troops. They take the warrior and not the citizen as their ideal. In the *Bundeswehr* there is nothing to encourage such a mystique, and indeed it is severely frowned upon. I myself believe that at Nagold they modelled themselves on the French parachutists, imitated their somewhat brutal methods of training, discipline, and punishment, tried to reproduce the same kind of image of the *para* as a super-man which the French have created.

"The curious thing is that in this they were following a model which the French in their turn have copied from us. The French have never ceased to try and understand the reasons for the fall of France. Some have come to the conclusion that the real reason was that the French army had lost its ability to fight and that a new army must be created in the image of our own, which had defeated them.

"Why do you think that the French production of Kleist's *Prinz von Homburg* had such an enormous success in Paris? It was because the French thought they saw in it the reflection of a military and ethical tradition which had proved superior to theirs on the battlefield. But of course the French understood Kleist in an entirely different sense from a German, and especially a Prussian. In either case, I can assure you that there is very little of the Prinz von Homburg in the *Bundeswehr*. But it is very difficult to create an army dedicated to the principle that Prussia was a criminal organisation. . . ."

Monumenta Judaica

PRUSSIA is by no means the only one of Germany's historic institutions which were destroyed by National Socialism, war, and defeat; German Jewry was another. In Cologne the city council has organised an exhibition commemorating two thousand years of Jewish life in the Rhineland. The exhibition itself is magnificent; it is also, by one of those paradoxes so frequent in Germany to-day, a great success. On a Saturday afternoon it was crowded, mostly with young people, and its closing date has had to be postponed for a month.

One would hardly have expected the exhibition to be so popular. It is not, after all, a pleasant thing to have displayed before you the history of a community which has lived among you for ages, has sometimes suffered and for short periods flourished, has been persecuted by you and has finally been liquidated by you. Perhaps it is the beauty of some of the exhibits which temper the grief and sorrow which the

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exhibition inspires: marvellous Hebrew illuminated manuscripts, Trees of Jesse that show Christ as the heir of the old dispensation, great seven-branched candlesticks in metal and glass, Otto the Great's jewelled imperial crown, its heavy gold studded with precious stones, that consecrated a Holy Roman Emperor with all the symbolism of Jewry. Even more touching, perhaps, is the collection of ordinary domestic articles in common use throughout the ages, worn by the daily handling of centuries, which show how, for the Jews, even the humblest activities became a form of ritual.

Many of the young people were in parties conducted by a schoolmaster or a priest. In the last section of the exhibition, which is devoted to documents and photographs illustrating "the final solution," a young priest was bringing his tour to a close. "Now I have shown you," he was saying, "some of the terrible crimes committed by the Germans against the Jews. But there is one photograph to which I wish to direct your particular attention. It shows the new and perfected mobile gas chamber installed at Auschwitz..."—and calmly, relentlessly, he recited the terrible figures of destruction of which the infernal machine was capable. The young people, a look of strain on their faces, listened in stunned silence, bemused, wide-eyed, awe-struck, incredulous.

The Trial

TO-DAY there are only 30,000 Jews left in Germany of the half a million of those who lived there in 1933. Of these only 15,000 are native to Germany, and the remainder are immigrants from the East. The German Jews are an ageing and a dying community, and one day no doubt will disappear altogether, so that it should really be possible to say that Hitler's solution was in its monstrous way a final one.

It is not really so. A "Jewish problem" still remains, only it is now a problem of conscience, which takes the form of a series of unanswerable questions which the Germans ask themselves about their responsibility for the liquidation of the Jews. It is like a deep-seated neurosis; some try to repress it altogether; some try to alleviate its symptoms; a few try to understand the condition which created it. But under the surface of German life it is always there. Perhaps it always will be until some German writer or artist at last succeeds in creating the great tragic masterpiece which the subject calls for.

If the Germans find it difficult (as who would not?) to answer the questions they ask themselves, yet they show a remarkable determination to establish the facts on which one day an answer may be based. The trial which is taking place in Frankfurt-am-Main of the twenty-three men accused of complicity in the mass murders committed between 1940 and 1943 in the extermination camp at Auschwitz is the result of an extraordinary series of accidents, coincidences, chance recognition scenes, which are a story in themselves. Nothing would have come of them if it had not been for the implacable determination of a few Germans that, for the sake of history, all the terrible facts must be exposed and, for the sake of justice, murderers must be brought to justice, even though their crimes are twenty years old.

To attend the trial is a profoundly distressing experience. It comes as no surprise when a spectator in the public gallery faints at the revelations of some more than usually ghastly detail. The green curtains are drawn across the tall windows of the courtroom. It is as if one were taking part in some terrible drama from which all the ordinary, familiar, comforting scenes of daily life had been excluded.

For as the evidence unfolds, another world takes its place. One gradually becomes acclimatised to, accepts as normal, the strange macabre universe of those who administered the camp at Auschwitz. Even the judge, small, pale-faced, suddenly looking much younger when he discards his velvet, silver-braided cap, who shows an admirable combination of impartiality and relentless persistence in his examination of the accused, sometimes gets confused between the world of every day and the nightmare world of Auschwitz.

"I don't understand," he says to one of the accused, Josef Klehr. "In the army, for instance, every man has his own particular job and is responsible for it. The armourer is responsible for the weapons, the signals officer for communications, the medical officer for health; and so on. But at Auschwitz *no one* ever seems to have been responsible for *anything*." Klehr looks at him as if he were mad; the judge has forgotten that Auschwitz was not like the real world. But Klehr feels that he is in some way being attacked and must say something. He clears his throat, "I did my duty and obeyed my orders," he says stolidly.

THERE ARE OTHER peculiar aspects of the trial. One is that the accused, and in their turn the

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judge and counsel, all speak the barbarous bureaucratic jargon of the camp, in which nothing was ever called by its real name, because that would have exposed its horrors too nakedly. It is as if the German language itself were tortured into the service of the camp. They speak, endlessly, of *abspritzen*, injection, which here has the sense of injecting phenol directly into the heart. Klehr, an SS man, explains with a certain patronising assumption of medical knowledge that this represented a technical advance, because, owing to their physical condition, it was difficult to locate the veins of the victims. They speak of *Selektionen*, the drawing up of lists of victims for the gas chambers; of *Absonderungen*, the sorting out of prisoners unfit to work and therefore qualified for immediate execution. The accused admits that he took part in these activities but, proudly, he claims that he himself had never administered an injection.

When he is asked whether, on a given date, he disposed of the bodies of some newly-born babies with the dirty linen, or whether he had made a human bonfire of a mother and daughter who refused to be separated when one of them was selected for the gas chamber, he replies that this could not be so, because he was on leave. But neither the facts nor the accusations particularly surprise or offend him.

It is a minor horror of the trial that, of the twenty-three accused, fourteen are on bail, and during an adjournment or the lunch interval leave the courtroom with everyone else and freely mingle with them. They laugh, smoke cigarettes, chat to each other, like members of some old boys' reunion whose paths have diverged in later life but who still have many happy memories in common. One finds them standing next to one in the lavatory, or lunching at the next table, or, as I did, goes down in the lift with three of them. It is as if the strange, perverted monsters one sees in pictures by Hieronymus Bosch had suddenly become the familiars of one's daily life; yet however hard one may stare at them, one discovers to one's dismay that they are indubitably human and bear no marks to distinguish them from anyone else.

And so, day by day, the trial goes on. It has now lasted two months and is expected to continue until the end of this year. It has become a part of the ordinary daily routine of life in Frankfurt. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* publishes admirably full and objective reports of each day's proceedings. A friend gave me a slightly cynical account of why the press publishes, and the public reads, such reports. "The trial," he said, "is the history of a crime, and even its most trivial details have the obsessional fascination of the details in a thriller or a detective story. People read reports of the trial just as they read the reports of any trial, the more gruesome the better. But all the same," he said, "whatever their motives, the important thing is that they do read them, and in the end the facts make an impression." *Magna est veritas et praevalebit.*

Carnival

AFTER THE FEAST of horrors provided in Frankfurt, it was a kind of relief to arrive in Munich. The Bavarians are an easy-going people, and Munich is an easy-going city; it has something of the atmosphere of Breughel's *Das Schlaraffenland*, the Land of Cockaigne, which now one can see once again in the *Alte Pinakothek*. After all the questions which press so insistently on one elsewhere in Germany, it was a relaxation to be among people who hardly ask any questions at all except what pleasures tomorrow will bring; all the more, perhaps, because in Munich one always has a sense that just over the mountains there is always a way of escape from all German problems, to the lands where the lemons grow.

And when I arrived Munich was being even more easy-going than usual, for it was *Fasching*, Catholic Germany's pre-Lenten carnival, to which Munich abandons itself utterly and completely. It had begun on the 11th of January and was now rising dizzily to its climax on *Rosenmontag*, the 10th of February. Every night, in every one of Munich's hundreds of places of entertainment, there were fancy dress balls, and until dawn the streets of the city swarmed with pirates, old colonial planters, gypsies, almost naked ladies, pussy cats with tails and whiskers, and others whose costumes owed more to Dali than to history or geography; the *Wilde West* was very popular. Pretty girls, who are not usually very much in evidence in Germany, seemed to have sprung out of the ground like flowers. In innumerable *Bierhallen* stout Bavarians and their wives drained their *Masskrüge*, huge mugs containing a litre of beer, as an Englishman downs a half pint.

During *Fasching* Germans, or at least Bavarians, behave with a whole-hogging abandon of which they are not usually thought capable. There was an atmosphere of drink and

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sex which gave Munich the air of some gigantic pleasure ground. Perhaps this is because, during *Fasching*, female desires have priority. The normal domination of German society by the male is for a period suspended, and *das Ewig-Weibliche*, the eternal feminine, released from every taboo or inhibition which convention, modesty, or marital vows normally impose, is allowed to indulge freely every fantasy which during the rest of the year she suppresses. And so she does, with results which are sometimes alarming.

But it was not really *Fasching* which endeared Munich to me. I am very fond of excesses, but Munich adds a touch of grossness to them which is all its own; though perhaps an Englishman should not complain of this when at "Eve's Bar" Miss Mandy Rice-Davies, like some unofficial queen of carnival, displayed her talents as public entertainer, which are almost non-existent, and her physical charms, which are potent, to Bavarian *Wirtschaftswunderkinder*.

Better than *Fasching*, or Miss Rice-Davies, who after all is always with us, are the splendours of the newly restored *Alte Pinakothek*, especially, when one has not seen them for so long, its gold-encrusted German primitives, its Altdorfers and Elsheimers and Breughels, which give one such a strange glimpse into the astonishing world of the German imagination. They make one realise how easily that imagination, even in its highest flights, becomes obsessed with the dark, the hidden side of our natures, its monsters and chimaeras and nightmares, shark-headed men, devils whose face is their anus, men-women who are also savage beasts.

But there was nothing of all this in the great *Michaelskirche*, now also beautifully restored and looking wonderfully light and fresh in its spic-and-span white and gold; or, even better, the *Asamkirche*, by a miracle undamaged during the war, where one gazes in amazement at the great golden sunburst laced with silver that crowns its high altar and the convoluted grey-green columns high up in the nave which carry such a wonderful burden of gilt and silver foliage, as in some magical forest of the tropics, that the eye can hardly trace their roots to the small grey figure of Christ on his plain wooden cross. It is not surprising that artists and writers should congregate in Munich.

But perhaps best of all was the *Nationaltheater*, whose restoration was only completed at the beginning of this year. Its interior, with its five tiers of semi-circular balconies, painted gold against white and papered in crimson, its two great caryatids flanking the central box of honour, shines as when it was first built in 1826, and now awaits the opening of the Richard Strauss Festival which begins this month. All Bavaria, publicly and privately, has contributed to this restoration, and it would appear that all Bavaria wanted to see it while I was in Munich, because it was only after intricate negotiations that I finally succeeded in obtaining a ticket for *Fidelio*.

I CANNOT THINK OF anything that I would have preferred to do on my last night in Germany. The cast, production, orchestra, and scenery were all alike excellent, and it was not surprising that when the final curtain fell they should have been met by such applause as I have rarely heard in any theatre. But indeed *Fidelio*, heard in Germany, seems to acquire an even greater depth and significance than it has elsewhere: what could provide a greater contrast to the terrible trial in Frankfurt? And it is as well to be reminded that Beethoven also was a German.

Fidelio ends with the triumph of freedom and justice, but it is a triumph that is only made possible by the fidelity of Leonore's love. There is freedom and justice in the constitutional, liberal, and democratic state which has been created out of shame and defeat in Western Germany. But as yet one cannot feel that its institutions inspire the love which is necessary to survival.

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Spectrum

A Backward Glance

LOOKING BACK in my 91st year on the tangled record of Anglo-German relations during my lifetime I can recall five distinct phases. It is a source of keen satisfaction to me that I have lived long enough to witness the rebuilding of the bridges, and to form the conviction that they will not be broken down again.

Victorian England was definitely Germanophile. The Queen had loved not only her husband the Prince Consort but the country from which he had come. She had little use for France which she regarded not only as our historic enemy but as thoroughly untrustworthy and unpredictable. The feeling of the Court was rendered warmer by the marriage of the Queen's daughter to Crown Prince Frederick, called by many people in England Frederick the Noble. Our hearts went out to him on account of the terrible affliction of cancer in the throat which prevented him from speaking intelligibly during his brief reign of six months in 1888, and after his lamented death we continued to display sincere sympathy with his widow. Queen Victoria's admiration for many aspects of German life was shared by most of her subjects and by none more than our grand old Thomas Carlyle, whose last and longest work on Frederick the Great was not only a biography but a declaration of faith in the system he had represented, namely, the philosophic despot or (to use another term) paternalism. Among contemporary thinkers none excited more interest or more distaste than Nietzsche with his doctrine of the superman and his repudiation, like a new Machiavelli, of traditional principles of morality. A further expression of admiration of the German people came from Cecil Rhodes who included the Germans among the beneficiaries of his educational trust. Last and not least comes Joseph Chamberlain who was so alarmed by the hostility of France and Russia that he took advantage of one of the long sojourns of Salisbury in France in search of health to propose *unofficially* to the German Ambassador a political alliance.

In addition to political factors the admiration for German culture and scholarship was very strong. England has produced the greatest of historical amateurs in Gibbon, Macaulay, and Carlyle, but what may be called professional history is the child of Germany. The date is usually fixed at 1824 when Ranke published his first volume on some of the nations of Western

As in our hundredth number, where we tried to document "attitudes to England" by setting no questionnaire but simply asking a dozen writers to pose the essential issues to themselves and recording the "spectrum" of replies as they came in, so now with "attitudes to Germany." Some are personal, others political; some write in terms of ideas, others of moods. Possibly the only theme was Heine's haunting lines

Denk' ich an Deutschland in der Nacht,
Dann bin ich um den Schlaf gebracht.
(At night I think of Germany, and then there's no sleep for me....)

And yet there emerges the strong suggestion that possibly one shouldn't think of Germany in the night: that's the trouble. At night one should sleep or read or make love, or whatever. Think of Germany in the daytime: isn't that problematical enough?...

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Europe at the close of the Middle Ages and added to it a very full analysis of the sources at the historian's disposal. Only by thoroughly mastering the evidence available could one reconstruct the past and in a famous phrase in his preface he declared that his only object was to show "how things had been." The remainder of his long life was devoted to the application of this principle and his masterpieces on the Reformation, the Papacy, Prussia, England in the seventeenth century, and France under the Bourbons stand as monuments and models not only for his innumerable disciples in Germany but for historical students and writers all over the world. In one of his last letters he wrote a sentence which might well be framed and hung on the wall of every scholar's study: "The writing of history is a matter of conscience." Next to Ranke among our German masters is Mommsen, and my personal debt to these two incomparable scholars is immense.

THE SECOND PHASE in Anglo-German relations opens at the turn of the century when the venerable Queen passed away and Edward VII came to the throne. The new ruler had as little liking for Germany as his mother for France, and he and the Kaiser had no great admiration or respect for each other; but there was much more in the change of atmosphere than could be put down to personal factors. The Kaiser had shocked British opinion by his telegram to Kruger after the collapse of the Jameson Raid in which he congratulated the Boers on the defeat of the aggressor and expressed his satisfaction that it had been unnecessary to appeal to outside Powers for assistance. Of far greater importance was the Kaiser's determination to endow Germany with a fleet in the Baltic of almost equal strength to the strongest army in Europe, which he already possessed. The feeling in England during these years in which I was first a Parliamentary candidate and then a Liberal M.P. that the Kaiser was not playing the game was almost universal, and in the years following the Liberal victory of 1906 no problem was more hotly discussed than what measures we ought to take to ensure our security. Our action however took a political rather than a military form, for there was a direct connection between the Kaiser's *Flottenpolitik* and Lansdowne's treaty with France in 1904 followed by Grey's treaty with Russia in 1907. By this time the map of Europe was completely transformed and for the few years before 1914 the Triple Entente (England, France, Russia) stood out in bold relief against the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, Italy). During the last years of peace war was frequently and openly discussed in both countries as a distinct possibility and the Balkan wars increased the confusion of the European chessboard. When the storm broke in 1914 we found ourselves at war with our old ally from the time of Frederick the Great and Napoleon. I recall a meeting in the very first days of the conflict with the Austrian historian Namier, who had become a British subject, in which I remarked that this was very painful for me with my German wife and that I had many friends in Germany. Putting on his most severe expression, he replied: "And I have none"—and walked away. A storm of anger swept over the country and the feeling was extended to the whole German people as the fortunes of war ebbed and flowed. Not everyone however allowed the blood to rush to their heads, and a group of Liberals and Labour formed the Union of Democratic Control which without opposing the conduct of the war, campaigned for the moderate peace which in their opinion alone held out a possibility of avoiding a repetition of the disaster. Among them were Norman Angell and E. D. Morel. This attitude was not confined to left-wing journalists and Members of Parliament, for in 1917 Lord Lansdowne with all the weight of his authority as a former Conservative Foreign Minister published his famous letter which was refused by *The Times* and appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*, urging that the popular demand for a war to the finish if carried through to the bitter end would render a post-war stabilisation of Europe almost impossible. I am glad to remember that I joined in a small deputation to Lansdowne House to congratulate the author of the letter on his courage and wisdom. When the fighting ceased our eyes turned to Paris where the

G. P. GOOCH, *the doyen of English historians, was born in London in 1873, and published his* English Democratic Ideas in the 17th Century, *the first of innumerable scholarly works, in 1898. His other books include* Germany and the French Revolution; Franco-German Relations 1871–1914; *and* Studies in German History.

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victorious allies spent six months in attempting to agree on the terms to be inflicted on our defeated foe and with the signatures of the Treaty of Versailles in the summer of 1918 the second phase of Anglo-German relations came to an end.

THE THIRD PHASE begins with the domination of Europe by Germany's foes. The country which Bismarck had made the strongest Power in Europe lay in the dust bleeding from a thousand wounds and brooding over the glories and triumphs of the past. The empire had disappeared in 1917 and for the first time the country had to fend for itself. Who was to provide the guidance, who to rekindle the flame of patriotism, who to inspire their fellow-countrymen with a belief in their resurrection? The answer was found by the authors of the Weimar Constitution and the middle-of-the-road statesmen of whom the outstanding representative was Stresemann. Many of the new leaders assured the world that the old Germany had gone for ever and the new rulers turned their eyes not to Potsdam but to Weimar. Many Englishmen with an innate generosity which distinguishes them perhaps more than the people of any other great Power soon felt a certain sympathy for their late enemies springing up in their hearts. Let us give them a fair trial, they said, depriving them for a considerable period of both army and navy but allowing them to recover their breath after the knock-out blow. I was one of those who sympathised with the *Weimaraner* for I knew that the German people had at any rate for the time being had enough of militarism and war. The feeling of England became decidedly friendly and slightly optimistic and when Lloyd George, one of the makers of the Treaty of Versailles, fell in 1922, the new men such as Ramsay MacDonald and Stanley Baldwin approached their problem with somewhat warmer sentiments. There were of course plenty of Englishmen who declared that they could never trust a German again but they were in a minority. No British Government however could do much to diminish the tension for France, who had suffered more than ourselves, was still in the hands of the intransigents with Clemenceau, the old tiger, at the helm. The wound of defeat and the burden of the indemnity weighed so heavily on millions of Germans old and young that the way was being prepared for the resurgence of German sentiment to a degree which no-one understood and exploited as fully as Hitler. Such then was the short-lived Weimar experiment which disappointed its sympathisers abroad only less than its leaders at home and which enabled the French to exclaim as they watched the formation of the Nazi Party: "We told you so." I paid several visits to Germany during the years between the Treaty of Versailles and the triumph of Hitler in 1933 and I can truly say that I found little trace of a desire for further adventures or aggressions in a people of which almost every family had lost one or more members.

THE FOURTH PHASE extends from the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor in 1933 to the surrender of Germany in 1945. As a lover of Beethoven and Schubert and Goethe and Schiller and Kant, and as a grateful debtor to the great German historians, I need hardly say that the coming of the Nazis filled me with grief and astonishment that the community which had once been described as "the nation of poets and thinkers" could allow itself to be ruled by a half-crazy fanatic who regarded it as his mission to wipe the Jewish race off the face of the earth. Democracy has taken a long time to strike firm roots in Britain, and in Germany it had never had a fair trial before the Weimar years which were too brief to enable it to sink into the heart and mind of the people. Mr. A. J. P. Taylor has suggested that Hitler was an opportunist skilfully turning the development of events as they occurred to his own purposes. This view is not generally shared and I retain my conviction that whereas in 1914 neither Germany nor any other Power desired a world war, the conflict of 1939 was decided on in advance as the only method of restoring Germany to the rank of a great Power and if possible to the position of the greatest of European Powers. As far as my observation goes there was far less anti-Germanism in the Second World War than in the first. In the earlier struggle we felt we were up against the whole German nation. In the second most of us felt that we were up against the Nazis who at any rate could only speak for a section of the people. There had been English critics of British policy before and during the First World War but there was no demand in the second for a com-

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promise peace and when the German hosts were defeated with the aid of the United States there was no suggestion of moderation.

THE FIFTH AND LAST PHASE of Anglo-German relations opens with the disappearance of the Nazis and this time no-one talked of another struggle to come. The energy with which the hard-working Germans rebuilt their shattered edifice, often described as "the German miracle," earned the respect of their victors, and the emergence of Dr. Adenauer with his policy of rebuilding the bridges to France, Great Britain, and the United States increased our assurance that the worst was over. Whatever may be said of his subsequent policies history will never cease to record the gratitude of Western Europe that he had the courage to recognise throughout his Chancellorship that Germany was a Western Power. At this period a new factor came into play as we realised not only the power but the ambitions of Communist Russia and as we witnessed the domination of various states in Europe, Asia, and the New World. History is largely the story of the unpredictable consequences of unexpected events. When the Czardom disappeared in 1917 no-one could have foretold that within half-a-century half the world would be under Communist régimes. Communist leaders, among them Mr. Khrushchev himself, have expressed their conviction that it is only a matter of a few decades before the rest of mankind would be gathered in the same vast fold owing to what they described as the greater fairness of the Communist system in the distribution of the total national output. Though Mr. Khrushchev declared no doubt with complete sincerity that as a father and grandfather he had no wish for war and all that was needed was a long period of peace, he continued to build up mighty armaments on land and in the air, the existence of which necessitated counter-measures. Who can tell what sort of leaders will emerge when Mr. Khrushchev's day is done? Our problem of security however cannot be solved in the military sphere alone. There had to be a new chapter in the relations of the great Powers and it was now that the path of safety appeared to lead to Bonn and Berlin. Once again Britain had changed partners in pursuit of the single aim of national security and at the present time a *bloc* has been formed of Western Germany, France, England and the United States which alone appears capable of defence. My survey ends as it began: England and West Germany once again not only friends but new partners in a grander design.

G. P. Gooch

Am I German?

I HAVE NEVER really understood why nations exist. The people who most enjoy talking about them have been least able to explain them to me; in fact, they haven't even tried. I refer to those vehement nationalists and their counterparts, the vehement anti-nationalists. For about thirty years now, I have been listening to both insisting that I am a German. I can't quite account for their emphatic tone, for I don't in the least doubt the truth of what they're saying; and yet they never seem to tire of bringing up this modest fact again and again. I can tell from their faces that they feel that they have proved something, that they have enlightened me about my own nature, that it is up to me to comport myself accordingly—*i.e.*, as a German.

But how? Ought I to be proud? Ought I to be ashamed? Ought I to assume responsibility, and if so, for what? Ought I to defend myself, and if so, against what? I don't know, but when I examine the faces opposite me I can guess what role has been assigned me. It is a role I can either refuse or accept. But even by refusing, I can't rid myself of it. For the other's expression already intimates his reaction to my reaction: outrage or satisfaction, approval or rage at how, *as a German*, I choose to behave.

My nationality, then, represents something expected of me by others. Of course, it is only one among many such "expectations"; my social status, my family background, my age—all call forth in every environment certain *idées fixes*, designed to form me or to deform me into what

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I am in the eyes of others: a villager, a thirty-year-old, a householder, or what-not. Strangely enough, the more clear-cut these ideas are, the easier it is to shake them off. Nationality, the most abstract and illusory, is also the most tenacious.

If history books are to be trusted, then there may have been a time, before the first World War, when Nationality stood for more than a psychological dimension. It seems to me that between the time of the Stone Age and that of the Space Age, the development of productive capacity reached, sometime during the 19th century, a point at which the sovereign nation-state offered the optimum form of organisation. (Such incantations as "BUY BRITISH," *"Deutschland, Deutschland über alles," "La Grande Nation,"* and "DEUTSCHE WERTARBEIT," presumably originated in those distant times.) Since then the productive (and destructive) powers controlled by mankind have multiplied to such an extent that the Nation State, as a form of organisation, has become not only obsolete but a deadly threat. Sovereignty has long ago shrivelled into a fiction of international law. The beer-hall is the only place left in which it is still accepted literally and taken seriously. Even Continental customs officials no longer seem to believe in it; like the Monaco guards, they serve more and more only as decoration; embarrassed smiles accompany their apologies as they mark our baggage with chalk crosses. In Western Europe, at any rate, the concept "abroad" is becoming more and more a reminiscence. Clearly, for business corporations, air-lines, and military strategists, it no longer exists.

FOR GERMANS, THE EXTINCTION of *Nationalität* as an objective, socially galvanising force is comparatively near at hand; nearer, anyway, than for citizens of older nations. We were late in acquiring our national identity and we have never felt very secure in it. Proof of this is the hysterical extravagance with which the so-called *"Nationaler gedanke"*—it was never, strictly speaking, a concept at all—has been propagated in our country since 1870. In 1945 we were divested of this identity so thoroughly that the question arises whether there is any point left in speaking about a German nation. For citizens of Frankfurt-am-Main, New York is only a stone's throw away; while a journey to Frankfurt-an-der-Oder has been transformed, psychologically, politically, geographically, into a major expedition. Nations thus can be destroyed from one year to the next; the very concept of nationality has become vulnerable.

We are not thereby made into cosmopolitans. The idea of the nation state may have ceased to correspond to any concrete reality, but it lives on obstinately in the form of an illusion, and illusions on this scale deserve to be taken seriously. They constitute realities in their own right, psychological realities with explosive potential: and I have often asked myself what binds us so fast to them. Presumably it is too troublesome for us to develop our own individual resentments and complexes, our own idiosyncrasies and neuroses. The phantom of the state provides every man with spiritual lodgings among whose furniture he can make himself at home; what's more, it's a ready-made assortment, with no necessity for individual choice, and with the enormous advantage of being shared with many others. This creates the kind of cosy solidarity which can be seen among people who drive the same car; whether the model in question is the fastest or the slowest, the best or the worst, is quite immaterial.

A macabre competition between these shadows of former nations has developed in our times, which runs side by side with the age-old contest for power and prestige: it is to see which has sunk the lowest and has the greatest troubles. This game, in which the old rules are reversed, is particularly popular among intellectuals. American liberals parade their racial problem, Italian socialists Catholic clericalism, English critics their Establishment, Russian poets the Stalinist past. This game, with its strong masochistic streak, is won hands down by the Germans. Our two trump cards are our so-called *"unbewältigte Vergangenheit"* and "the German question." These slogans refer to fascism and to partition; around each a set of complicated, precisely regulated rituals has evolved, to none of which I can quite reconcile myself. Self-hatred and self-praise—self-pity and arrogance—look all too much alike. The underlying supposition remains unexamined, and to me it seems vain: that the so-called "national destiny" is involved. Perhaps it is this illusory supposition which renders our concern with Nazism morally and politically so unfruitful. The microscopic inspection to which the national character is subjected makes me increasingly impatient. It re-invests the quality of "Germanness" with metaphysical proportions—

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only this time the pattern is reversed. Once it was Good, now it is Evil which is being biologically or racially diagnosed. Other countries, too, as a result of some anti-German feeling, prefer a Manichean interpretation of the crimes of the twelve Hitler years to a historical analysis. There, as here, the blame is imputed to an apparently eternal, unchangeable quality which is thought to be "typically German." This way of "mastering" the past is not only sterile, it is positively suspect. It begins to look more and more like the ceremonial exorcism of devils; and the contrition, officially put on show, is nothing but an exercise in superstition. Its peculiar motto is *"Qui s'accuse, s'excuse."* Nothing will ever come of this. No one will ever forget or forgive what happened in Auschwitz.

Yet I cannot regard mass murder, conducted on an industrial scale, dictated by the state, as only a national problem for the German people. Germans committed it. But why should this engross some people more than the discovery that mankind is capable of anything? Thus, Auschwitz is made into a German speciality, into the outgrowth of some hypothetical German collective soul.

In reality, this collective soul deserves no attention whatever, and I suppose that (with the exception of some Germans and some Germanophobes) the whole world is fed-up with it. How tedious are the self-recriminations which have been coming out of our country since 1945! —as if salvation of the collective soul were the point at stake, as if the very idea were not itself an unhistorical mystification! And what are the results of the national exorcism? To what end does *"das Deutsche Volk,"* as it is officially called, beat its breast, when so much soul-searching does not even induce officialdom to remove Nazis from positions in public life? Of what use is national consternation if it does not even lead us to recognise that there is a close historical connection between fascism and Germany's partition? How far can our remorse for the persecution of Jews be believed, while the *Bundesrepublik* continues its absurd persecution of Communists?

Our national "self-awareness" has borne many remarkable fruits; but none, surely, more astonishing than the relationship which we have formed with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is the arch-fiend, that goes without saying. More than that: there's a widespread feeling in West Germany that we have suffered the most acute injustice at the hands of the Russians.

In front of me lies a small map. Its heading is "LOSSES OF POPULATION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR." On it are crosses: one cross equals one million killed. I can see five crosses in Germany, five crosses in Poland, and one cross in Yugoslavia. Next to the word "Soviet Union," I can see twenty of these crosses. In a small museum in Leningrad I saw a piece of stale bread the size of a man's thumb. This was a day's ration for the city's inhabitants during the winter months of the German siege. It was smaller than a prisoner's ration at Buchenwald.

I do not get the impression that anyone in Germany is attempting to "come to terms" with this past. The customary ritual is hardly suitable. For the past has direct historical and political consequences; these call for action, not for ill-defined feelings of guilt. They demand real changes with a view to the future.

I chose the example of the Soviet Union because it shows that our national narcissism continues and that little is achieved by occasionally turning its pattern inside out. These methods are no longer applicable, they cannot solve any serious problems. War and peace, the differences in the world's economic and political systems, the constant possibility of genocide for which new preparations are daily being made—these are not national problems. The worst thing about the partition of Germany is not that it causes suffering to the German people, but that it can lead to a world war. The nuclear arming of the *Bundesrepublik* endangers the peace, not because it might rouse the devil in the German national character, but because it would provoke the Soviet Union. Fascism is abominable, not because the Germans practised it, but because it could be practised anywhere.

TO BE A GERMAN does not seem to me to be a harder or an easier lot than any other. It is not a condition *à part*, it is one fate among many. I see no occasion to bemoan it or to disclaim it, and none at all to regard it as a distinction. It is inherent in the nature of all derivations that one never quite breaks away from them; but it is also inherent in them that one grows further apart from them every day. I have no wish to quarrel with those who attach more importance to the fact that I am a German than I do. I will accept this fact whenever possible, and ignore it whenever necessary.

H. M. Enzensberger

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Bismarck & Adenauer

FOR AN HISTORIAN the present moment is an especially fascinating one, and he will be forgiven for being preoccupied with "the end of the Adenauer Era." Of course it is too early to assess the Chancellor's work from an historical viewpoint; I am sure that ten and twenty years from now the arguments for and against will still be raging fiercely. The issue will inevitably be decided by the course of future events and their interpretation. If his successors should prove less capable, if new complications should arise, then people will say—as they said after Bismarck's fall—that Adenauer would never have let things come to such a pass: and a comparison will be made between him and his successors, and made in his favour. (On the other hand, they may equally well say—and this was also an argument that was put forward after the fall of Bismarck—now you can just see what a mess he made of the succession!) And if those who follow him should prove capable, then people will still be free to give the credit to the great predecessor—or to withhold it—just as they see fit.

What is quite certain is that Adenauer was more than a mere "representative man" of his period; that he ruled and led his people and made his mark no whit less than the great statesmen who were his predecessors; and that he belongs in their exalted company despite the simplicities and severities which were part and parcel of his character (for who amongst his equals is without such, or comparable, failings?). Churchill's remark that Adenauer was "the greatest German since Bismarck" will remain unchallenged for the time being. But then perhaps it is not such a sweeping statement after all, for who was there between Bismarck and Adenauer, whom it would have been an honour to have surpassed?

Adenauer is a *Bürger*, the purest example of *das Bürgertum* ever to lead the German nation. Ebert and Noske, Braun and Severing, were, though they claimed to be Republicans, far more strongly influenced by the Prussian hierarchy than he ever was; indeed, he was never influenced by it at all. The same is true of the representatives of the middle classes and big business at that time, Rathenau, Stresemann, Bruening, who were all monarchists, all Hegelians (even if, unlike Bruening, they did not take to Hindenburg and the Prussian Army).

Not a sign of all this in Adenauer, the lawyer and local government official from the Rhineland, who even in those days thought in social, and not diplomatic, terms, in terms of *Gesellschaft* and not *Grossmacht*, who was not unduly impressed by the tradition of the monarchy, the generals and aristocrats. And so it would seem that Cologne's *Oberbuergermeister* found it relatively easy to bid farewell to the monarchy and not very difficult to enter into temporary and skilful co-operation with "revolutionaries," without creating the impression, fashionable at the time, of "changing horses" with the greatest possible speed and cynicism. This is surprising enough in a man who went to school in Bismarck's Germany and who by no stretch of the imagination could be called a rebel, who was so conservative and authoritarian and patriarchal —and yet so un-Prussian, so utterly devoid of any feeling for Germany's feudal and military past.

To-day he is older than the oldest of the potentates of yesteryear (the Emperor Franz Josef, Queen Victoria) at the time of their death. He is exactly sixty years younger than Bismarck and he was a dashing young student during Bismarck's lifetime. Did he ever make the pilgrimage to Friedrichsruh, as so many of his fellow-students did? In any event I cannot simply leave the comparison between Bismarck and the "greatest German since Bismarck"; for the sixty years that separate them have been more fateful than whole centuries on older calendars.

BOTH HAD great confidence in themselves and very little confidence in their people. But Bismarck was a *Künstler*, a reckless gambler, who juggled with any number of different objects at one time. Adenauer had only one object, which he held firmly in his hands and carried always in the same direction. (In the impressive memorandum which supported his candidacy for

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Chancellor in 1926, he stated that he too was in favour of "Locarno," but what he disliked about Stresemann's policy was "the way it was always changing, always going off on some new tack.") Bismarck's thinking was feudal and historical, conceived in terms of State, Class, and Power. Adenauer thought in terms of the social order and set out to conduct German foreign policy on the grand scale only in order to put an end to German foreign policy on the grand scale. Bismarck was a spirited writer and even something of an intellectual adventurer: Adenauer was not. Bismarck was a Junker with all the privilege and pride of a noble house; Adenauer was a hard-working *Bürger*. In his prime Bismarck suffered from constant illness, his powers were quickly spent, and, tortured by bad nerves, he led a hectic, undisciplined life. Adenauer was the epitome of order and conduct, a model of physical and mental equilibrium. Listing the differences between the two men, one finds that the personal differences and the differences of generation tend to merge.

But there are also similarities, for they plied the same trade and plied it within the same German tradition. Both were greedy for power, first because they wanted to do great things with it, and subsequently because they had grown too accustomed to it and looked upon themselves as indispensable institutions. Both were seasoned tacticians and masters of political detail. In the great affairs of state both showed themselves capable of consistency, honesty, candour, and fidelity, and both showed themselves capable of the exact opposite of all these qualities. (It is this almost inconceivable polarity, at which the brain reels, which prompted Theodor Fontane's assessments of Bismarck—Fontane, the Berlin novelist, who described Bismarck so often, with such great admiration and at the same time with such amazement and distaste.)

Both of them thought very little of abstract ideas; they dealt with concrete things, pragmatically. They both made a myth of their success, and both were duped by their myth. It carried them forward for a long time, but as the end drew nearer, it grew weaker. Both were religious and had a strong sense of duty; at the same time, as a by-product of their sense of duty, they both had worldly attitudes. Religion was one thing, politics another. They themselves had great strength of character and yet they surrounded themselves with helpers of equivocal moral standing; their intolerance and distrust always made them ready to equate independent opinions with stupidity or malice.

Bismarck left to his heirs an explosive system of military alliances, an outmoded constitution, a society split by class hatred—problems among which he had been able to manœuvre, but which overwhelmed his successors. Was not that, however, more their fault than Bismarck's? In those slow-moving times they could have taken a quarter-of-a-century to solve their great, unsolved problems. Will Adenauer's successors, I wonder, have as long?

Golo Mann

Then & Now

AT LEAST since Prince Albert landed on our shores Germany has been an English obsession, and, I imagine, *vice versa*. One has only to turn over the turgid pages of a book like Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* to realise the force of this passion, on whose lunatic fringe stood figures like Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Even to-day there is at least one eminent Tory who once deliberately cultivated a moustache like Nietzsche's; and our Royal Family, despite Lord Beaverbrook's complaints, remain more attached to things German, including their German relatives, than to home products like the *Daily Express*.

All strong passions breed their opposites, and the excesses of Germanophiles have been matched by those of Germanophobes. As lunacy gained upon him, Lord Northcliffe became increasingly convinced of the existence of a malign German conspiracy directed against him, his country, and his religion and civilisation if any. He was not alone. In the pre-1914 years it was on the extreme Right that anti-Germanism flourished, whereas the Left in those days was inclined to be pro-German. English trade unionists felt at home with their German counterparts, who were respectable, hygienic, substantial figures, with little propensity, like French, Spanish and Italian trade unionists, to grow beards, take to anarchism, throw bombs, and cohabit with females to whom they were not married. At international gatherings one saw the German and English contingents sitting together with mugs of beer

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in front of them, and their wives beside them, casting suspicious glances at wine-drinking, whiskered colleagues from warmer climes. There was also the fact that Karl Marx was a German. Though English Socialists, with a few significant exceptions, have resolutely refused to read Marx's works, they have always nourished a warm regard for him personally. This may be attributed to the fact that he chose to live in London rather than in Paris, had the good taste to be buried in Highgate, and enjoyed the notable distinction of being elected a Vestryman in the Borough of St. Pancras.

As a child in a socialist household, I well remember how Germans were accorded special honours by comparison with other foreigners. They were, I was given to understand, clean, industrious, and ardent social-democrats. Talk of their bellicose intentions was put about, I gathered, by armament manufacturers, and by reactionaries envious of their orderly progress towards prosperity and enlightenment. If there were authentic warmongers abroad in Europe, it was surely the French, ridiculously obsessed with *la gloire* and *revanche*. As for the Russians —they lived down-trodden and oppressed with only an occasional Tolstoy or Kropotkin to lighten their darkness. The Austro-Hungarians were little better; the Emperor Franz Josef with his divided beard was clearly no friend of toilers by hand and brain, who, I was assured, would shortly inherit the earth, and particularly that edifying portion of it occupied by the estimable Germans.

August, 1914, shattered all this. My father, like many another old Socialist, never quite recovered from the shock of seeing the German social-democrats meekly vote war credits to the Kaiser's Government. I experienced a similar reversal of feeling. On my way to school soon after the German invasion of Belgium I passed a group of boys eagerly throwing mud at a drawing of the Kaiser, with his characteristic upturned moustache, which someone had scrawled on a wooden fence. At first somewhat hesitantly, I joined them in this pursuit, and was thenceforth lined up on our side for the 1914–18 war.

Our previous regard for the Germans made our hatred of them in war the more bitter. The whole nation engaged in throwing mud at the Kaiser, requisite supplies being assured by Allied propaganda, directed by figures like Northcliffe, Beaverbrook, and H. G. Wells. What a trio! Once the war was over, however, the Leftists mostly resumed their old stance; berated on Keynesian lines the Treaty of Versailles; and saw the Germans as the injured innocents of Europe, starved by a vicious Allied blockade, kept on the edge of bankruptcy by the malignancy of the French, and prevented by the vile militarists of the Little Entente from taking their proper and rightful place in the League of Nations.

These were the Isherwood days. Mr. Norris changed trains; in a pound sterling were many marks, and in Berlin many curious pleasures to be purchased with them. Young, blond, tanned Germans in leather breeches and ornamented braces twanged their *lauten*, and went ever *weiter ins blaue*; English holiday-makers still on the Gold Standard found themselves millionaires when they visited Oberammergau for the Passion Play.

As a leader-writer on *The Manchester Guardian* I was happy to expound the pro-German position. It was *Guardian* doctrine, in any case, that our country was always in the wrong, and the vanquished necessarily in the right. This applied with particular force to the Germans, who were, we insisted, being relentlessly ground down at the behest of the vainglorious French and their venal allies. It was to be hoped (we pontificated), it was greatly, if not devoutly, to be hoped, that wiser counsels would prevail, and men of goodwill everywhere ensure that the great German people were re-admitted to their rightful place in the comity of nations, among whom, otherwise, there could be neither peace, stability, nor true prosperity.

The rise of the Nazis necessitated a re-deal, but while the cards were being shuffled a certain amount of uncertainty prevailed. Leftists like Vernon Bartlett, not to mention Sir Oswald Mosley, were inclined to see some good in Hitler and National Socialism, while reactionaries of the old *Morning Post* school instinctively abhorred them and all their works. In time a change of partners was effected. Leftists became anti-German, and began to have romantic feelings about the French army, and a regard for their old enemy, Churchill; the Rightists who a few years before had been clamouring to hang the Kaiser and squeeze the Germans till the pips squeaked, felt that, with reasonable give and take, and a proper consideration of the other fellow's point of view, an advantageous accommodation with the Third Reich could be worked out.

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By the time the 1939–45 war broke out, officially at any rate, anti-Germanism was universal, and greatly exacerbated by the supporters of the Munich Pact who worked off their feelings of guilt by raging against the Germans more noisily than anyone. How far such intense hatred of Germany and the Germans really existed outside Broadcasting House, and other organs of the body politic, is more doubtful. My own impression in the Army was that hostility to Germans as such was much less, at any rate, among other ranks than might have been supposed. This was partly because the English, especially the lower classes, tend to be anti-Semitic (though, of course, neither they nor anyone else will openly admit it). It was common experience in the N.A.A.F.I. or Sergeants' Mess to hear someone say that, whatever you might think about the Nazis, "they knew how to deal with the Jews. . . ." This did not mean, I hasten to add, that the speaker approved of Belsen or Auschwitz, but only that, in a vague sort of way, he found Nazi anti-Semitism understandable, if not acceptable.

There was also the fact that, in an even vaguer sort of way, most soldiers felt that the war was a mistake rather than a crusade, or even a calamity. Few of them were as mistaken as Churchill, or as obtuse as Roosevelt, about the shape of things to come, and dimly realised that the national sovereign state, not to mention the British Empire, in whose defence they were supposed to be fighting, belonged to the past. They cheerfully sang *Lilli Marlene*, undeterred by the thought that the enemy were going about their business with the same song on their lips. It was the British Government, egged on by the unspeakable Cherwell, who decreed the senseless destruction of Dresden; British troops had to be prevented from fraternising with Germans by their own military police.

Nor, one was happy to note, did the macabre fantasy of Nuremberg evoke much response from demobilised troops or civilians at home. Such occasions are for judges, editors, and orators; for the rulers, not the ruled. The ordinary citizen, unlike a Lord Birkett or a David Maxwell Fyfe, just could not take seriously, for instance, the denunciation of the partition of Poland by a bench of judges which included a Soviet one appointed by Stalin.

As long as the Germans were starving and poverty-stricken they were assured of a certain amount of sympathy among English Quakers, and the enlightened generally. A lot of this was dissipated when they ventured to become rich and prosperous, and to pile up a larger gold reserve than ours. Further irritation was caused by their reluctance to arm. All the Old German Hands had told us that the Germans would repeat their performance after the 1914–18 war, and first go bankrupt in order to be in a position to repudiate their debts, and then clandestinely re-arm. So much the more infuriating was it, then, when they built up one of the soundest economic and financial positions in Europe, and had to be coaxed into mounting a force of even a few divisions! Who, Englishmen were asking bitterly and rhetorically in saloon and public bars all over the country, wants to win a war?

As we get used to an affluent and unwarlike Western Germany, the angry feelings begin to subside. In a decade or so, with any luck, all the German experts in the Treasury and the Foreign Office will have died or retired, as will all former Nazis in positions of eminence in the Federal Republic. There are hopeful signs that Germans are becoming less industrious and efficient, and may well, it is permissible to hope, soon be as indolent and improvident as we English are. We have fortunately lost our empire, and are tending increasingly to turn away from its dismal afterglow, the Commonwealth. Thus, no sort of colonial rivalry can again arise.

In these circumstances, the German problem may be expected to disappear even from Chatham House and the leader columns of *The Times*. What a blessed relief! It is true, of course, that Herr Ulbricht has an interest in protracting its existence; but he will not, one hopes, live for ever. Even Old Stalinists have to die at last, and their obsessive manias with them.

Malcolm Muggeridge

Disenchantment

I became a Germanophile when I was about seventeen. First it was with the learning of the German university professor that I fell in love. I thought at that time that German professors knew everything there was to be known —I still tend to believe that about the German professors of Classics, Ancient History, and Assyriology (and my belief may well be true as far as those subjects are concerned). Max Weber, Werner Sombart, and Eduard Meyer were the

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first ones to appear on my horizon. I learned about Max Weber from Bukharin's *Historical Materialism* and Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, and I set out to learn German in order to read his writings. His themes seemed so grandiose, his classifications so rigorous. Troeltsch, Rickert, Simmel, Dilthey, Scheler, Spranger, Windelband—all but Rickert and Spranger were dead but even the dead ones were very alive to me. I read widely in that unique series of academic autobiographies published by Felix Meiner under the title of *Die Wissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*. The photographs of the bleary-eyed old men with bushy or with straggly beards were a little chilling, but all else warmed my heart. The peaceful university towns, the professor's study cluttered with books and learned journals, the unpaid *privatdozent* serving only for love of his subject, the polemics on behalf of truth formed parts of this happy picture. It was only much later that I learned how boring, tyrannical, vain, and trivial many of them were; but when I was young, I didn't see that at all. Composure and calm, disturbed only by the intensity of scholarly debate, were the dominant features of a community of learning which began in the 18th century and which ran uninterruptedly and unchangingly to the present. Along with this peaceful mixture of past and present, I was also excited by the virtues of the culture of the Weimar Republic, then nearing the end of its brief and unhappy life. No decade, not even the 'thirties in the United States, depressing and dramatic though they were, ever took possession of me in the way in which the Weimar decade, reflected in my rather inaccurate and ill-assorted knowledge of the Weimar culture—liberal, socialist, Marxist, bohemian, melancholy, intense, desperate—did. It was an intoxicating mixture of Hermann Hesse, *Menschheitsdämmerung*, Karl Mannheim, Heinrich Cunow, Georg Grosz, Peter Lorre, Gustav Landauer, Ernst Toller, Georg Lukács, Karl Wittfogel, the *Bund der religiösen Sozialisten*, von Salomon, the early Tillich, the Malik Verlag, and so many things now forgotten but still faintly fragrant.

This was also the period when the *Reich*, in so far as it was ruled at all and was not a state of nature, was being ruled by Article 48. There was incessant brawling in the streets and in the *Reichstag*, and the country was going through the motions of preparation for what would have been a civil war if the Communists had not been such scoundrels and the Social Democrats so wooden-headed, and if both or either had not been so cowardly.

While I was well in the grip of this unbalanced and unrealistic Germanophilia, the Nazis came to power. I knew from the beginning that they were brutes and fanatics and I was aware of the tortures and beatings in police headquarters and concentration camps. Yet my image of Germany did not suffer from this, nor from the fact that Heidegger and Freyer and Brinkmann had become Nazis. All these things, large and small, might have counted more against my idea of Germany, had it not been, paradoxically enough, for the arrival in the United States of a flood of German refugee scholars and scientists. Had I been more sensible, I should have seen that their presence among us was tangible evidence of the ruin of Germany. It is true that most of them spent little time regretting their misfortunes—they were too busy settling into new posts in American universities, preparing lectures, writing, etc. They were faithful Germans and they were proud of their baggage. They brought with them their prejudices, their editions of Nietzsche and Burckhardt, their furniture and their porcelain; they soon found the right pastry shops. They were *"deutsche Staatsbürger mosaischen Glaubens."* Most of them didn't feel at ease in America; its vulgarity and naïvety put them off. Even those who were grateful for the generosity with which they were received lived in little German cells, speaking of the old Germany and very little of the new Germany which had extruded them. Thus throughout the 'thirties I lived, at least in part, in a German culture—in New York and Chicago. It was impossible to live in a leading American university at that time without having numerous German refugee colleagues and friends—and clients, too, even though I was too young and certainly too uninfluential to be a patron of any value at all. Meanwhile, I was working through the German literature in my diverse subjects. I translated a number of German writers into English. I was in a way a member of a German university which

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transcended space and time, and which nonetheless redounded to the credit of Germany.

Yet great events, intimacy, and the simple fact of becoming a little less simple-minded with age and further study, began to dim my picture of the German academic intellectual. What I read of the history of the German university, and of German academic biography, made me aware of the rudeness and arrogance of some of the greatest German scholars and scientists, their wicked prejudices and their subservience to their temporal rulers. Their vanity and meanness began to become apparent to me. At first I regarded it as a charming eccentricity. Then it began to pall.

The *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, with its long articles, its fine white paper, its strong yellow covers, the *Verhandlungen* of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie*, likewise published by Siebeck in the same yellow covers, still appealed to me. But I was becoming less impressionable. The authoritative tone did not hide the vagueness of the deep perception or the superficiality of the vague perception, the weakness of judgment, and the closure of the mind to new problems. There were too many ready-made phrases covering too few ideas. Of course, I was still attracted by the world of those writings, by the bearded men with frock coats, wing collars, beards, learned, profound, honourable, perhaps even on occasion grimly witty. But these beards seemed more and more often to be hiding weak chins. The furrowed brows seemed to be hiding minds no more serious or penetrating than anyone else's.

I remember having been a little put out many years ago when I first read William James' account of his meeting with Dilthey. The gravy-stained frock coat and the egocentric loquacity were unpleasant but they really were nothing against the fact that Dilthey had read all there was to read, knew all there was to know, and in some way which I didn't understand had grasped the essential truth of things. Ten years later I recalled his talkative indifference to those around him and it seemed more offensive. I was also more aware that he wrote of matters which he understood very imperfectly and that the problems on which he took such a strong position were still entirely unsettled.

NOWADAYS, THERE IS almost nothing left of my youthful Germanophilia. Except for Max Weber and a little of Troeltsch, the writers who made my heart beat faster when I was young seem no more able to handle the problems which seem to me to be important than any of the rest of us. And their heirs, some of whom are most honourable scholars, seem to be in an even leakier boat than those of us who had an easier life in the '30s and '40s. They have to reassert an identity of which they are doubtful and they must elaborate an inheritance which, except for Max Weber, was drying up for many years before the Nazis undertook to destroy it. I feel sorry for them, especially those of the new generation who are as blameless as original sin permits anyone to be for the monstrous actions of the brutes who ruled Germany from 1933 to 1945. I try to keep in contact with their writings —but more from a general sense of intellectual duty and much less from an expectation of discovery of something vital.

Occasionally, during the 'fifties, some German "leader," indulged by the naïvety of the U.S. State Department and the largesse of the American Congress with public funds, would come to see me. He might be a professor of one of the social sciences or a journalist. He was usually a youngish-middle-aged man—old enough to have been in the *Wehrmacht* in the last years of the war. In our conversation, National Socialism very seldom appeared. Sometimes refugees from the formerly German territories of the East were mentioned, sometimes (especially in the early 'fifties) the mistakes of the American occupation policy. It was when we talked of academic things that I perceived how much we had changed. They seemed like men who had been asleep for years, and even now were scarcely awake. It was not that they wouldn't talk. They were full of the commonplaces of American sociology and political science and of the international highbrow nonsense about mass society. They had no wing collars, no frock coats, no beards, no gravy stains; but they had lost more than the old-fashioned regalia of the world of learning. And it wasn't just that they were rather poor intellectually. How could it have been otherwise when their elders had reduced their universities to a shambles? There was something more. I often seemed to have before me a man whose father or friend or cousin or uncle or brother was in a department concerned with the "settlement" of the Jews in Eastern Europe, who did his duty and thought no more on it; and—for all I knew, my guest might have been vaguely or precisely aware of what that friend or kinsman

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was doing and even thought well of him for his faithful performance of his duties. What I saw in them was that other Germany, not the Germany of Heidelberg or the Weimar Republic, but the Germany which could not afford the minimal moral exertion of the disapproval of wickedness.

I know that this was sometimes unjust or uncharitable to my interlocutors. Perhaps it was an excessive reaction against the enthusiasms of my youth. I know that resistance against the Nazis was something which only the bravest, the noblest, the maddest could bring themselves to produce and I don't hold that against anyone. But it is the failure to disapprove of what should have been condemned which still colours my feelings about Germany to-day. And yet, I know too that those feelings, real and even legitimate though they are, are no fit foundation for, the right relationships of countries and of colleagues.

Edward Shils

Myths and Hopes

A NATION is essentially nothing more than a myth that men enact. It has no physical existence in itself, any more than Shakespeare's *King Lear* has physical existence in itself. True, it requires a physical stage and stage-props—geographical territory, public buildings, military equipment, etc.—but these are not the nation itself. They are merely aids to its enactment.

When we refer to "the present division of Germany" as unacceptable, what we mean is that the enactment of two separate German states violates a myth with which we have been brought up. It violates the script of a play with which we are familiar.

We think of something called "Germany" as having an immutable standing in nature, like the Atlantic Ocean. In fact, however, it has its standing in tradition, and tradition is not immutable, however stubborn. Before 1871, the concept of "Germany" embraced Austria as well as Bavaria, Saxony, Prussia, and the other states called "German" to-day. Bismarck's achievement was to unify all these German states (over three hundred of them) with the one exception of Austria, traditionally the greatest of all. By the terms of the original tradition, then, Bismarck did not succeed in making Germany one—he succeeded only in getting it down to two.

The new generation that grew up after 1871, however, grew up to a new nominal situation and a new myth based upon it. As a consequence of Bismarck's achievement in 1871, the name "Germany" no longer included Austria, and so "Germany" was completely unified. When Adolf Hitler forcibly incorporated Austria into Germany, a couple of generations after 1871, he was considered to be violating the separate national personalities of "Austria" and "Germany" by a union regarded as against nature. But it would not have been regarded as against nature sixty-five years earlier, before the myth had come to exclude the great south-German state.

Myths and traditions, I repeat, have no standing in nature. They are subject to change with the passage of time.

TO-DAY, IN THE Federal Republic of Germany, the myth of one Germany artificially cloven in two conflicts with certain practical considerations. A large part of the West German economic and political community, while paying more-or-less ardent lip-service to the cause of reunification, privately admits that if reunification were announced for to-morrow afternoon at three they would go into a panic. What would happen (they ask themselves) to their private businesses and to the West German economy as a whole? What would happen to the balance of political forces? After almost a score of years in which the East Germans have been indoctrinated in left-wing authoritarianism, what would happen to the liberalism that the West Germans have been working to develop and establish? Soon there will be a new generation of East Germans that has grown apart from the new generation of West Germans, a generation brought up on other myths, other traditions.

The question of what dire practical consequences might attend an imminent reunification

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is academic, however, since everyone recognises its impossibility. This is what enables many West Germans to wave the banner of reunification with untroubled enthusiasm. It is like embracing virtue nominally without having to change one's way of life. Reunification has become an eschatological objective, and no one in his senses ever worries about the practical problems that might follow.

Nevertheless, the movement for reunification has much to support it. The East Germans speak German (like the Austrians) and (unlike the Austrians) call themselves German; they have shared a common history with the West Germans; many of them have families in West Germany; and the geographical area in which they suffer is within hailing distance, so to speak, of their West German relatives. There is also the problem of Berlin, which can hardly have a solution satisfactory to the West as long as the present pattern of two Germanies persists. Consequently, those who would go into a panic if they learned that reunification was imminent are, at the same time, unable to accept the present situation as eternal.

What then?

We mislead ourselves when we think in terms of going back to the *status quo ante bellum*. It is true that, for those of us who grew up before the Second World War, the *status quo ante bellum* represents the norm. Anything else, it follows, seems against nature. There can be no stability and peace, we suppose, until "normalcy" is restored. Where we are dealing with myths, however, "normalcy" is relative: those who grow up with new myths, based on new situations, will conceive it differently than do those who grew up with the old myths based on the old situations. Long after the western Roman Empire had fallen, Charlemagne tried to restore "normalcy" by having himself crowned emperor in Rome, in succession to Augustus. But it did not work. History keeps advancing beyond the old positions, so that the *status quo ante* can never be restored. I conclude that the pre-war Germany will never be restored.

It does not follow that the present situation will endure. On the contrary, the present situation seems to me too strained and too dependent on force for that.

What, then, may we realistically work for?

We may, I think, realistically work for a continuing series of small adjustments that are progressive, tending over the long run in one direction. The two Germanies already have entered into agreements regulating the very considerable commercial exchanges between them, and the fact that these agreements are unofficial has only a limited significance. There appears to be a set of tacit agreements, to-day, for policing both sides of the Berlin Wall in such a way as to prevent dangerous incidents. There are agreements, tacit or otherwise, on Western use of certain roads across East German territory to West Berlin, and although these agreements are officially between West Germany's allies and the Russians, unofficially they involve the West German authorities and the rulers of East Germany alike. Recently, certain additional perforations were made in the Berlin Wall to allow West Berliners to visit their relatives in East Berlin during the Christmas holidays, while East German Communist bands played Christmas music. A complex of relationships has been developing across the boundary of barbed-wire and cinder-block.

Relations between the two Germanies should develop as fast as the Cold War diminishes in its intensity. If we can look forward to a time when the Cold War has faded into the past, then we can surely look forward to a time when this development has gradually produced an intimate association between the two. Herr Walter Ulbricht, who now rules over the East Germans on behalf of Moscow, is not immortal. The day may come when the East Germans are enjoying a relatively free and prosperous life. They may then feel an unforced allegiance to an evolved East German state that has acquired respectability in their eyes and the sanction of custom—that has, in a word, acquired legitimacy. (After all, the way the good society generally comes about is by evolution of the bad.) It will also, then, have acquired legitimacy for the West Germans and the rest of the world as well. Even though it still bore the antiquated label of "Communism," that would make no real difference. Communism, too, is a myth that can change. (Communist bands can play "O Little Town of Bethlehem"!)

When Germany was unified in 1871, the boundaries of Bavaria, Saxony, and the other pre-existing German states did not disappear. They are there, still, to-day. I do not foresee a time when the present boundary between East Germany and West Germany will disappear either. However, when both states have an equally accepted legitimacy, common interests

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will impel them to set up an institutional complex for the regulation of their association. Perhaps they will begin with joint committees *ad hoc* and end with a joint parliament. Just as there is, to-day, a "Greater London" that has gradually come to consist of a number of separate cities bound together in close association, so we may look forward to the day when there is a "Greater Germany" embracing East and West; and perhaps, just as "Greater London" is part of a United Kingdom, so "Greater Germany" will be part of a United Europe.

This, it seems to me, represents the direction in which all concerned should strive.

IT WOULD BE WELL, in that case, for us to appreciate certain life-and-death problems that confront Moscow in East Europe, problems that we can aggravate or mitigate by our own behaviour. To sum it all up in a phrase: Moscow to-day has a bear by the tail. If it suddenly let go of the East Germans, all the other East Europeans might well break loose, spreading chaos over the map, turning against Moscow. The prospect of a hostile and reunited Germany would alone be enough to alarm Moscow. Consequently, if we get tense, strident, and bellicose in our insistence on the liberation of the East Germans, Moscow will out of a compulsive fear tighten its grip on the bear's tail. The bear and his champions must in some degree become pacified before Moscow will feel safe in letting go. One may doubt that the experience of Hungary in 1956 has been forgotten.

Neither have two German invasions in this century been forgotten. The problem is less that of giving Moscow explicit guarantees against a Greater Germany moving eastward once more than it is that of creating a situation in which such guarantees are implicit. Such a situation, however, can hardly exist in the present context of the Cold War.

What we should do, I think, is to keep up the essential strength of the West in order to make the continued retention of East Germany and the satellites difficult for Moscow, while manifesting, at the same time, the kind of gentle and understanding disposition that will make a withdrawal seem safe. The day that we may thereby hasten is not necessarily the day when German reunification takes place but the day when there is no longer any problem of German reunification.

Louis J. Halle

After the Apocalypse

MY GERMANY was neither exotic, like Herr Issyvoo's, nor apocalyptic, like the Germany the Allied soldier discovered among the ruins of 1945. By 1954, when I arrived in Munich, the rubble was almost gone. In Schwabing, Munich's Chelsea, the great, grey, steel-and-concrete mammoths of the *Wirtschaftswunder* had begun to rise, jostling aside the Art Nouveau façades of the Munich of Thomas Mann, Kandinsky, and Richard Strauss. One phrase in particular—the title, I think, of a Schwabing cabaret skit—seemed to catch the mood of the time: *die Helden sind müde*—the heroes are grown aweary! For that, I suppose, the foreigner should have been grateful. I remember reading that Herr Blank, Adenauer's Defence Minister, had been set upon at a meeting by a swarm of crutched and armless war cripples—shades of the *Dreigroschenoper*! But the idea of a new *Wehrmacht* really *was* unpopular, especially among the young people I mixed with. Many had sympathised with the S.P.D.'s *Ohne Mich* campaign of the early '50s; the new affluence hadn't yet reached the students. A car was unimaginable; though one or two had mopeds. They still lived very much in the hand-to-mouth, free-and-easy, pleasantly egalitarian style of the years after 1945. They talked gloomily, if they talked of politics at all, about "Restoration." By Restoration they meant, not the neo-Nazi scares being worked up by the British press, but the supposed influence of prelates, bankers, and big business men at Adenauer's new Court in Bonn.

Still, it was not always clear what was being "restored." Certainly, it was not Nazism. The Nazis I came across were well-placed, middle-aged gentlemen; car-dealers, insurance-brokers, tax-consultants, doing better out of the *Wirtschaftswunder* than ever they had done out of the Party. Like everybody else, of course, they too had heard, seen, and done no evil. Nazism represented a misspent youth, twelve delinquent years, and a war that had gone kaput. Nazism was no longer (but, in a sense, had never been) an ideology to these men: it was referred to simply as *Die Nazizeit*. It was plain that Nazism was very much a generational thing; and by 1954 the young men who had flocked to Hitler in 1933 were a very sorry generation indeed. Decimated by war, robbed of their illusions, self-confidence, self-respect, it was difficult to

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see in them any kind of threat. In 1954, of course, the row over German re-armament in France and Britain was at its height. (Much was also made—and not only by Bevan and Beaverbrook—of Colonel Remer's antics in Lower Saxony, the Otto John scandal, the arrest of the "Naumann-circle.") Anglo-German relations, after a brief recovery at the time of the Berlin airlift, were fast returning to their traditional state of misapprehension, mutual envy, and misunderstanding.

As I BEGAN to know my way around, I realised that the new Germany was made up of three generations, each isolated from and hardly able to communicate with its neighbour. The middle generation I have described; culturally and politically, it represented a vacuum in the new society. But the people who ran this new Germany were either much older or much younger: Adenauer and Heuss on the one hand, Strauss, Schröder, Mende on the other. The same was true of the arts. There were elderly Expressionists, now turned respectably academic; there were Thomas Mann and Hermann Hesse, Gottfried Benn and Bertolt Brecht. There were also much younger writers—Bachmann, Enzensberger, Grass—beginning to publish in the little magazines, though as yet little known. But between these two generations, the sons and the grandfathers, there was sparing contact. Brecht and Benn, each in his own Germany, had their faithful followers, their *gemeinde*. But Mann and Hesse, though deeply revered, were already unimaginably distant figures. And the war-writers, the writers of the 1930s, the generation of Sartre and Auden, where were they? It was, I suppose, for voices from this generation that one looked most carefully, and there appeared to be none. Had they bled away, like an earlier generation, on the Passchendaeles of the Eastern front? Or were they, like the rest of their contemporaries, shell-shocked, apathetic, burnt-out? Looking back, I think it was the effective absence of this middle generation that disturbed the foreigner most in the Germany of the 1950s.

Now, ten years later, the situation has changed a good deal: there is once again a German literature of more than local interest, the work of writers whose memories of Nazism are confined to childhood and adolescence. But only a decade ago, a glance at a bookshop or theatre programme was enough to show that something was badly wrong. The great majority of those excellently produced volumes in those bright, efficient little Munich bookshops were translations—mostly, as they put it, *aus dem Amerikanischem*. The American writers then admired in Germany were, it struck me, a curiously mixed bag: Thomas Wolfe, Archibald MacLeish, Thornton Wilder, Truman Capote—and, of necessity, Hemingway. In the theatre, again, there was a strict division between the Ancients—represented by Schiller, Kleist, and Grillparzer—and the Moderns—represented by Tennessee Williams, Jean Giraudoux and Christopher Fry. Where are the young German dramatists? That was—and still is—the critics' burden. Dürrenmatt and Frisch were much acted; but the fact that Germany herself had produced nothing of first-rate quality since Brecht could not be disguised. There was something alarming, at that time, in the readiness of German intellectuals to assume that any foreign play or book must *ipso facto* be superior to its German equivalent. The real difference between the Germany of those years and the Germany of Weimar—and I believe it accounts for the difference in quality—was that after the German political collapse of 1918 confidence in *den Deutschen Geist* remained unbroken, whereas after 1945 the very phrase could be handled only with the strictest irony.

IN ALL, I spent four years in Germany: one year in Munich, three in Berlin. I returned to England in the autumn of 1958, and have since been back to Germany, vacationing or reporting politics, some half a dozen times. Yet if I'm asked how the Germany of to-day differs from the Germany of ten years back, I don't find it easy to say. Certainly, there've been no dramatic changes. The gaps in those gaunt, grey façades are now filled. The ex-service students I knew have been replaced by a generation that knows nothing of the war, of Nazism, or indeed of any Germany before Dr. Erhard's *Wirtschaftswunder*. Has Germany's evil past been "overcome"—*bewältigt*, as they say? Not if you look for some general act of contrition, some collective repudiation of Nazism and its works. Yet I believe that in one sense—though here Germans of my generation, like Martin Walser or H. M. Enzensberger, may disagree—the past *has* been overcome: it has become unreal. I read recently that a group of German school-children was asked: Who was Adolf Hitler? A fairly high percentage simply did not know. Those who thought they knew were agreed that he

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had been a very bad man (20 per cent thought he was a Communist, 10 per cent a Jew). Superficially, this might seem a disappointing result for our own, and democratic Germans', efforts to "re-educate" Germany. It is, of course, undeniable that this unreality of the recent past is a sign that the Germans have not "overcome" it in any inward sense. But it is also a sign that it is now too remote, too strange, too different from the present to be fully entered into. By the same token, because the past holds no nostalgia for most Germans, the threat of a repetition seems utterly remote. For those now growing up, the *furor teutonicus* of thirty years back is hardly less distant than the Thirty Years War.

Nevertheless, the Germany of 1964 is not quite the Germany of ten years ago. Politically, true, there is the same impasse; Germany is no nearer to reunification, the SPD no nearer to political power. Still, I've noticed two important if intangible changes. That older, three-generational pattern I thought I discerned in the Germany of the '50s seems to have given way to a simpler division between pre- and post-war generations. At the same time, there has been a notable, if gradual, revival of self-confidence, in literature and the arts, as in the field of politics. The bookshops are still well stocked with translated works; but there is now German work too, of ambitious quality, able to hold its own against the flood of importations. Possibly, the adulation of Günter Grass has by now gone too far. Possibly, as Peter Heyworth suggests, there is even an element of chauvinism in the insistence that, in the field of music, literature, and the arts, Germany is "back." One may feel, too, that these self-confident younger writers' insistence on the gulf dividing them, the post-war generation, from their (as they readily tell you) Nazi-contaminated elders, is a little gratuitous. But the gulf exists: it's notorious that, in many families, and in many schools, communication between parent and child, teacher and pupil, has become enormously difficult. Still, to an outsider at least, the line of conflict does not always seem well chosen. In these last years, for instance, Mr. Sebastian Haffner has come to be looked upon as a champion of the German Right, never reluctant to needle these young whipper-snappers of the Left. One's natural sympathies, I suppose, are with these younger writers, just as the natural sympathies of the '30s generation were with the Tollers, the Piscators, the Brechts, among their contemporaries. Yet there's something in Haffner's reproach to the younger generation in Germany that their anti-Nazism is, shall we say, rather cheaply won—that it's hardly for them, who never experienced the terror, to condemn their elders out of hand—there's something in this reproach that rings true. One has the feeling that, in imputing universal guilt to their elders, younger Germans are quitting themselves too easily of the whole affair.

GERMANY IS A country much like other countries: is that the conclusion? Personally, against her severer critics, whether at home or abroad, I think it should be. There are too many people anxious, from doubtful motives, to maintain the opposite—British anti-Germans, German Nazis and anti-Nazis, the whole tribe of those who have made Germany their "subject" and would have their subject "interesting." I suppose I too had wanted Germany to be an extraordinary country: reprobate, but reprobate on the grand scale; enigmatic, but an enigma to which one might find a private key; sordid and violent and frightening, but *interesting*, a tale to write home about. In fact, the Germany I knew was none of these things. Germans were really—I discovered to my chagrin—quite ordinary people. Where, I used to ask myself in Berlin, where are those colourful Isherwoodian characters you have been taught to expect? The answer, in fact, is that the really colourful characters in Isherwood—Sally, say, and Mr. Norris—are all *English*. There were true exotics in the Berlin of 1930; but they are not in Isherwood, whose Germans seem often so sad, so pale, so pathetic.

The truth is, Isherwood and his readers also suffered from the apocalyptic illusion. They, too, wanted their Germany to be interesting. It is possibly a lowering thought; but maybe, after all, the Victorian view of Germany was the more sane. Industrious, cheerful, law-abiding, good-natured, loyal, slow-witted at times, but eminently, eminently respectable—these were the Germans of Arnold, of George Eliot, of Victoria and her Consort. These are also the Germans about whom Herr Enzensberger and Herr Walser and their friends make complaint. But Goethe and Nietzsche in their time also complained of the fate that had set them down among *this* people, compelled to write *their* language. To the outsider, the attitudes of Herr Enzensberger and Herr Walser must seem entirely traditional. The Germans they complain

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about are the Germans as they always were—and perhaps always will be. It depends, I suppose, on whether you admire these characteristics or abominate them. Personally, I find them neither exotically attractive, nor hatefully repellent. Of course, anti-Germanism in Britain is still strong, assiduously inflamed on both left and right; but this, too, is a hangover from the Age of the Apocalypse. The trouble is, perhaps, there has been simply too much fuss about the Germans. We all need a rest, and nobody more so than the Germans themselves. *"Habt Mitleid mit Euch selber!"* Brecht implored his countrymen after the war: have compassion on yourselves! Not bad advice. After all, if the Germans can't learn to put up with themselves, how can we be expected to put up with the Germans?

John Mander

De Germania

AS I AM NOW RISING seventy-five, Germany has been impinging on my consciousness for about sixty years by now. In my successive images of Germany, there is a sharp dividing line at August, 1914. Before then, Germany, for me, meant German classical scholarship: it meant intellectual giants like Theodor Mommsen and Eduard Meyer and Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff; it meant the great series of Teubner editions of works of Greek and Latin literature—so much more enterprising and more exciting than the Oxford texts, which limited their range to the small circle of super-classical authors. When I was an undergraduate at Oxford, and a don there, after that, till the First World War prised me loose, I knew, of course, that there were people in Britain who were prophesying war with Germany and were urging us to prepare for this. Lord Roberts, for instance: my contemporaries and I wrote off the poor old fellow as senile, and we condemned the less venerable scaremongers as mischievous lunatics. In Greece in 1911–12 I used to listen to Greek peasants discussing whether the war was going to start next autumn or next spring. In Oxford in 1913 I listened to Sir Lewis Namier, back from his father's estate just on the Austrian side of the Austro-Russian frontier, describing how the Austrian and Russian armies were standing poised, within twenty minutes' walk of one another, all ready for action. But these warnings made little impression on me, and the shock of August, 1914, was proportionately severe.

It would not have been so bad if I could have persuaded myself that the Germans were a different species from the rest of the human race. If only they could be proved to be descended from Neanderthal Man; if only they were authentic "Huns"; then their psychological obtuseness, their political imbecility, their bellicosity, their brutality would still inflict grievous injury on the rest of us, of course, but at least these German failings and vices would not implicate the reputation of any human beings except the Germans themselves. But I could not believe that; I could not dissociate the Germans from ourselves; I could not repudiate our kinship with them; and this was the heart of what was shocking and horrifying in the Germans' atrocities.

That Western classical scholarship, for instance, on which I had been brought up: what would be left of that if one tried to cut out the German contribution to it? And Western music: Why, when we say "music" we mean "German music": cut out that and there would be hardly any Western music at all. Well, anyway Shakespeare was not a German, though the Germans have tried hard to appropriate him. Yes, but Goethe was a German; and, thanks to my having been thoroughly grounded in *Faust* at school, Goethe happens to mean, for me, what Shakespeare means to most people whose mother-tongue is English. So I could not cast Germany off; and, ever since August 1914, she has hung round my neck as the albatross hung round the Ancient Mariner's. What the Germans have done between 1914 and 1945 has shaken my confidence in the Teutons, in Western Civilisation, in human nature. If the Germans are Teutonic barbarians, then so am I, in spite of my laboriously acquired veneer of Hellenic and Judaic civilisation. I wish to goodness I were a Latin; but there is no escape there; for Latins are Westerners and the Germans are Westerners too. Well, at least I am human; but the Germans, like me, are specimens of *homo sapiens*. So, considering that the Germans have done what they have done, I have no guarantee that I and my fellow-Englishmen and my fellow-Westerners and my fellow-human beings might not do the same if we happened, one day, to

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be conditioned as the Germans have been. This knocks the bottom out of the sane, rational, moral world into which, till August, 1914, I fondly believed that I had been born.

I DO NOT THINK I am peculiar in feeling like this about the Germans. I fancy that I should find the same feelings, quite near the surface, in the hearts of Germany's former victims and present partners in the Six. And I know that I should find these feelings in the Russians, Poles, and Czechs. I can completely understand, and completely sympathise with, the Russians' abiding fear that their country may be invaded and devastated by German armies again for the third time—and, this time, with the vast economic war potential of the United States placed at Germany's disposal, not at Russia's. If I were a Russian, I am sure I should be haunted by this dread of Germany. Given the Russians' experience of Germany, they must continue to regard Germany with misgiving, suspicion, and anxiety. It is an obvious point and a key one; yet the Germans—yes, even these well-behaved *Bundesrepublik* Germans—seem to be incapable of grasping it. They do not seem to see that, unless Germany will co-operate with America to remove Russia's fear —a most genuine fear—that Russia may be going to be attacked again, there is not the ghost of a chance of reunion of the two fractions into which Germany is divided now. Then are the Germans still as stupid politically as ever? Or do they still imagine, notwithstanding their experience of two shattering defeats, that eventually they will be able to achieve reunion by going to war again? Can't they see that, in the Atomic Age, another war would bring with it, for Germany, not re-union, but annihilation? When such thoughts run through my mind, I come near to despairing of a world in which the Germans are apparently still incorrigible and in which the rest of us are still bone of the Germans' bone, and flesh of the Germans' flesh, in virtue of our being the Germans' fellow *homines sapientes* (what a biting irony there is, since 1914, in that smug scientific label which our grandfathers pasted on to our species).

THESE THOUGHTS are daunting, but happily there is something more to be thought and said. Those despairing thoughts include some loose thinking. "The Germans," to begin with: What do we mean by those two words? Of course we mean Prussian militarists, Hitler, the SS., the ghoulish wardens of the death-camps; but, if we mean that by "the Germans," we must also mean these German ogres' German victims. And some of their German victims were heroes. They deliberately braved torture and death rather than acquiesce in what Hitler stood for. There may not have been many of them. But, then, how many heroes have there ever been anywhere at any time? A few heroes are enough to be the salt of the earth, and the German people have contributed a notable quota to the little band of heroes of our time: a bigger quota than the British people perhaps, since, so far, no British Hitler has given us those German opportunities for heroism that Hitler gave to his countrymen by bamboozling them into letting him come into power. I myself, for instance, have not been called on to be a hero; it was not laid upon me even to cross umbrellas with Mr. Chamberlain; and, if I had dared, it is inconceivable that that good man would have retorted by sending me to the gas-chamber. If I had had to face what my martyred German friends Bernstorff and Kuenzer had to face, can I be sure that I should have risen to the occasion as they did? My self-confidence is ebbing again, but, this time, in a less pharisaical way, I think.

"The Germans"—like any other human tribe, they are a mixed bag. If, in our time, the German tribe has produced ogres, it has produced heroes and martyrs as well. And, when I think of those German martyrs with whom I was personally acquainted, my confidence in German nature, Western nature, and human nature begins to seep back again. The Germans have the same nature as the rest of us; and there is comfort, as well as horror, in this fact. Human nature has a fiendish vein in it, but our fiendishness is never irredeemable. If America and Russia get together (as they now seem to be inclined to do) to save mankind from liquidating itself, the human race's expectation of life on this planet is said to be of the order of about 2,000 million years. How many years did it take for human nature in Germany to be conditioned to those bad German habits of which Prussianism and Hitlerism were the dreadful fruits? This process of German mis-education took an infinitesimally short span of time compared to the length of the time that we all have ahead of us; and habits can be unlearnt as quickly as they can be learnt. For all that I know, a majority of the Germans may have already sloughed off those unfortunate habits that made Prussianism and Hitlerism possible.

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This is, I believe, the voice of reason, charity, and humility. It is a voice that is telling me of a brotherly, helpful, and constructive way in which I can, and should, approach my German contemporaries now. I hope that I and my non-German contemporaries are going to listen to this voice and going to be guided by what it says. But I, too, am only human; I am the prisoner of my personal experience in my life-time; and this means, I fear, that I shall not be able to follow the voice of reason and charity quite whole-heartedly. The nightmare vision of Prussian Germany and Nazi Germany will continue to haunt my memory as long as I live. Probably it will not disturb my grandchildren's minds; and it certainly will not be a problem for our common descendants two thousand million years from now.

Arnold Toynbee

To The Sun

More beautiful than the remarkable moon and her noble light,
More beautiful than the stars, the famous medals of night,
Much more beautiful than the fiery entrance a comet makes,
And called to a part far more splendid than any other planet's
Because daily your life and my life depend on it, is the sun.

Beautiful sun that rises, his work not forgotten,
And completes it, most beautiful in summer, when a day
Evaporates on the coast, and effortlessly mirrored the sails
Pass through your sight, till you tire and cut short the last.

Without the sun even art takes the veil again,
You cease to appear to me, and the sea and the sand,
Lashed by shadows, take refuge under my eyelids.

Beautiful light, that keeps us warm, preserves us, marvellously makes sure
That I see again and that I see you again!

Nothing more beautiful under the sun than to be under the sun . . .

Nothing more beautiful than to see the stick in water and the bird above,
Pondering his flight, and, below, the fishes in shoals,

Coloured, moulded, brought into the world with a mission of light,
And to see the radius, the square of a field, my landscape's thousand angles
And the dress you have put on. And *your* dress, bell-shaped and blue!
Beautiful blue, in which peacocks walk and bow,
Blue for far places, the zones of joy with weathers that suit my mood,
Blue chance on the horizon! And my enchanted eyes
Dilate again and blink and burn themselves sore.

Beautiful sun, to whom dust owes great admiration yet,
Not for the moon, therefore, and not for the stars, and not
Because night shows off with comets, trying to fool me,
But for your sake, and endlessly soon, and for you above all
I shall lament the inevitable loss of my sight.

Ingeborg Bachmann
translated by Michael Hamburger

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Martin Walser

A German Mosaic

When We Were a Nation...

MY GRANDFATHER didn't know he was a German. In 1870, people in our part of the country rallied to the *Bavarian* flag. My father, who went to the Royal Bavarian Gymnasium, would never even have become aware of his Germanness, I suspect, had he not been given extra-curricular, and somewhat painful, tuition in matters of patriotism from 1914 to 1918. When he came back, those terrible years had to have had their purpose; it was best to believe it had all been for Germany's sake. So, in my own case, the matter wasn't open to question any longer: I was supposed, from the outset, to be a German. (I don't take account of the reservations offered me in the name of Bavaria: these had more to do with folklore and heraldry than with nationhood.) Still, our fathers' generation evidently considered the patriotism manufactured in Berlin and in Weimar insufficiently light-fast—hence the murderous brainwave that Germanness was a matter of physical characteristics. Biology was to provide what history and tradition, no matter how impertinently falsified, had failed to provide: the True German. What we did as biological Germans, in search of our specific character, is rather well known. Since then one would really prefer to forgo being German for good. But just as one isn't a German by choice, so one can't lay aside one's nationality at will either, and dodge the whole business. Those who can afford to become Liechtensteiners obviously aren't driven across the frontier by conscience, but by the income tax inspector. So we, who have to put up with living in our country, do what we can to make it easier for ourselves, either by pretending to look at things from a great distance, or by just shutting our eyes; we have to make the best of being more-or-less German. In the nick of time, our attention has been directed to a new enemy—Communism, which has enabled us to mobilise our national feelings anew. Though, even now, we are not very definitely German....

Before we even had a chance of becoming Germans, those historical successors of the nation-states, the supra-national ideologies, had grown up. Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, the Swiss writer, who was rather well-disposed towards us, was wrong when he prophesied us a late maturity: "When others are wilting, you shall become a state." We haven't become a state. We have remained a population, a collection of tribes, just about able to sustain a common language. The world wars and the railways did more to unify these tribes than Bismarck's founding of the *Reich*. Still, we owe it to him that the railways were called, for a time, the *Deutsche Reichsbahn*. How little of a nation we are was proved, however, when Germany was inoculated after 1945 with two different ideological germs. How quickly the two sections grew apart! To-day, Germany no longer exists. There's much talk about "reunification in peace and freedom." But how are Frankfurt-am-Main and Frankfurt-an-der-Oder to be brought together in one state in peace and freedom? True, no politician of any standing fails to express his devotion to the doctrine of reunification; meanwhile the two Frankfurts simply drift further and further apart. Nor can one see an end to the process. Daily, the politicians of both Germanies demonstrate to their mutual inoculators that ideology can engender a degree of hostility in a people compared with which the chauvinism of the past begins to look humanitarian....

Is it true that we Germans, always eager to be in fashion, again bear the lion's share in the creation of enmity in the world? There is terrible poetic justice in the fact that the division of the German nation is the outcome of a war of which Germany was guilty because it acted as a nation. To present ourselves as a nation we have obviously always needed some sort of pinchbeck with which to dazzle and delude our not very fertile political talent. *Das dritte Reich*! Even the name is political humbug. Should one expect the results to be less grotesque than the causes? Germany was split as the "nation" which it pretended to be, but never

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really was. Thus, brutally divided, Berlin now symbolises a national destiny which—apart from the war years—never had any reality.

Still, we are probably fairly safe now from those weak-minded hereditary rulers and half-mad *Reich*-fanatics who wanted to *weld* us into a nation. At a frightful price, we are delivered from the compulsion to become a nation. We may be permitted, here and there, to be Germans. We may be permitted. We in the *Bundesrepublik*, for example. Later, we may be one of the United States of Europe. What would be our contribution? What will there be about us that is specially German, when we have no *Reichskanzlei* to tell us? Of course, everybody outside Germany knows just what is specially German. The detachment conferred on those who chance to live, say, in Vienna or Zürich, makes it easy to see what it is about a man that makes him German. Those are the clichés: take them or leave them. Personally, I prefer description, actual experience. I'd like to offer a picture which, in point of accuracy, is able to compete on equal terms with the familiar clichés.

Scene in a Train: *sehr deutsch*

SUCH A TRAIN at once has a national atmosphere about it. You find yourself sitting among people from Cologne, or even from Kiel. No one knows anything about anybody else. Until a person opens his mouth all you can assume is that he is a German. Or, at least a West German. Ashtrays, mirrors, photographs: all project an idyllic Germany. (In this compartment: "Bärbel von Ottenheim" and the Neresheim monastery.) Plastic upholstery on the seats. Everything supra-regional. One feels it straight away: railways are a national thing. One's spine knows just the angle between the back-rest and the seat; one's lungs are not surprised by the air in the compartment; one's physical self confirms that one is in a German *Schnellzug*. To gain still further assurance of this, let us proceed to the dining-car. In the corridor of the first-class carriage there's a gentleman wearing a mouse-grey suit one's tempted to stroke. He's holding, on a very short lead, a thoroughbred Alsatian, continually tugging away. To protect his evidently sensitive hands from being cut by the lead, the gentleman wears leather gloves open at the wrist. Above the gold strap of his wristwatch straggling hair is visible; on the top of his head he no longer has any hair to speak of, though there's still thick growth down on the steepest part. A scar runs down to the left corner of his mouth. Obviously for the sake of symmetry, he vigorously depresses the right corner of his mouth as well. This gives him a particularly resolute expression; it seems to please him greatly. Before I can pass the man with the dog, another very pale gentleman, making himself as small as possible, has slipped through the invisible gap between the dog's muzzle and the wall of the corridor, followed by a lovely black-haired lady who strides through boldly. The man, shorter than the woman, turns half round as soon as he's through; one can see he's stretching out his hand to give her courage. But the determination with which she approaches and navigates the narrow space was clearly intimidating: he lets his hand fall and sways on ahead. The man with the dog gazes after the two—*stares* after them, I'd have said, if the verb were permissible in connection with so well-bred a gentleman. He simply can't take his eyes off them. Nor can his dog. I seize the opportunity to slip through too. And suddenly it dawns on me: the black-haired lady and the pale gentleman are *Jews*. And, as though this were a necessary element in the picture, it dawns on me that the scar running down to the corner of the dog-owner's mouth must be a duelling scar. No need to think further—the minute events of the past sixty seconds are explained: the timidity with which the pale gentleman slipped through, the demonstrative courage with which the dark lady strode past the restless muzzle of the dog, her refusal to accept protection, the stupefied fascination that caused dog and master to stare after the vanishing couple, as though something had escaped them.

I was in a dark mood; the waiter showed me to a seat in the dining-car. All by themselves the minute events of those sixty seconds were expanding inside me into a scene from the worst chronicles of Germany. The couple, the gentleman with the dog—three travellers totally unknown to me—were all playing parts that were familiar. I could have localised the action: Salonica or Theresienstadt.

I was disturbed: the waiter put the mouse-grey gentleman at my table. Gloves and dog were absent. Was he trying to hide something, to avoid being recognised? But he couldn't simply step out of his part: as soup was served, he shook the pepper and salt vigorously into the dish, two shakes each. He hadn't tried the soup; he knew by experience that no cook could

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ever put in enough seasoning for him. Before I'd half-chewed my second mouthful, he'd finished his meat. Then he smoked. The waiter had to tell him not to. He immediately stubbed his cigarette into a large *S*, and went on pressing till it broke in two places. He did it without commentary, without a disgruntled or ironic gesture. He obeyed, it seemed to me, as only men obey who know how important it is that orders be carried out—because he, outside the dining-car, was one of those who always give the orders. He was positively glad to obey. He obviously enjoyed being the obedient one for a change. I could already see him, at the next opportunity, telling his subordinates how he'd stubbed out his cigarette in the dining-car without the slightest word of complaint against the waiter or the railway regulations.

He has placed his sharp jutting chin in a fork made up of index finger and thumb. The index finger is bent outwards. He is looking at me. Or past me. In the mirror, I see that the Jewish couple are sitting behind me. He's staring at them in such an odd way I'm afraid they won't stand it much longer. He raises his coffee cup from the table without looking, drinks, puts the cup down on the table again. But all the time his eyes are directed beyond me.

I think to myself: thus does a murderer lose his will-power and let himself be drawn back to the scene of his crime!

Yes, and then the gentleman at my table suddenly can't stand it any longer. He rises, goes up to the couple, asks very politely in French if he may sit down with them for a moment....

After a few minutes I learn that all three are from Geneva: he is a surgeon and the pale gentleman a judge. They have only seen each other once before, among a crowd of people, but they've a lot of friends in common. A few more minutes and they are drinking toasts to those absent friends, the glasses filled with *Châteauneuf-du-Pape*. I return to my compartment. I realise that I am angry with the man. It is as though it had been he who had deceived me. But might not everything have happened exactly as I'd imagined it?

A Career in the West

A REPORTER, naturally, is delighted when reality comes to meet him half-way. So I was delighted when I discovered the refugee camp at Ludwigsburg, because the ever-changing occupants of this camp supplied me with exactly what my editor wanted: documentary stories of life in East Germany. My richest source of information proved to be a slight young man who claimed that he hadn't fled for political reasons. He hadn't distributed leaflets; he hadn't sabotaged the improvement of the margarine supply; he hadn't any reason at all to fear a dawn visit from the *Sicherheitspolizei*. On the contrary, he'd gone along with everything, done some work for the theatre, for the radio—wherever he could make himself useful. And he obviously had the kind of talent needed to rise in that world. He even claimed to have been a theatre director in a provincial town. And yet he'd fled. Why? He'd simply had enough of it. He hadn't ceased to hope for an increase in the butter ration; but he couldn't stand it that the suits, the shoes, the shirts, and the cars never improved in quality, that the newspapers remained as wretched as the dance music. To us he was a godsend. My editor told me straight away I'd shown I had a nose for news. He was getting a bit irritated because all the documentary life-stories were so alike. However hard life might have been for the person in question on the other side, however respectable the reasons for his flight, there had gradually developed a stereotype story—looked at journalistically—that did violence to my editor's professional instincts. And now we had a rather special case: this young man who, without any fuss, simply wanted to get something out of life, who hadn't found what he wanted on the other side, and had got out. At last we had, not a tragedy, but an intriguing allegro, a fine specimen of the picaresque. We'd simply never come across anything so flatly *hedonistic* before. What more natural than to invite this young man to join the paper? He needed work. Since I knew he wouldn't get a post as theatre director in West Germany without a good deal of waiting about, I suggested on behalf of my editor that he join us. The most natural thing, of course, was to give him the job of interviewing the refugees. Glad to have found so expert a successor, I turned to other things, though I continued to watch the young man's progress. He soon picked up the job; that's to say, he grasped what was wanted. Not every life-story is equally suitable, obviously. The new man was quick to see that. Still, even when he'd learnt to pick the right stories, the editorial board were worried because his accounts lacked the particular tone required to bring home to the public what the bare facts of a biography mean to the

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person involved. Refugee associations complained about the new man's impartial, almost indifferent reports. Suspicions were aroused. Was he, by any chance, a Communist? Thank God, he wasn't. He realised in the nick of time that he would just have to change his tone or switch to the business department. And, sure enough, as time passed, his tone began to exhibit the correct degree of asperity or indignation, whichever was called for. Don't misunderstand me: it wasn't a question of truth or untruth. He'd always told the truth; you couldn't avoid it in those refugee life-stories. Where he'd failed was in getting the right tone in his comments on what we then called *"die Zone."* (I employ the word "Zone" for "DDR"—the East German *Deutsche Demokratische Republik*—throughout, in order to get the atmosphere of the early 'fifties; I don't think that our new form, "the so-called DDR," was in use at that time.) So much for the tone, then. Our young man learnt it so well that never again was he under suspicion of being a secret emissary of the other régime.

Meeting him again some years later, I noticed he'd adopted the same tone in private conversation. He'd even improved on it! The vocabulary gleamed, the words stood to attention. By comparison, our language of ten years ago sounded like Salvation Army jargon. So he'd not been idle. Nothing recalled the slight, easy-going young man he'd once been. He'd matured, one might say. And he'd become a specialist. He kept ceaseless watch on what was happening over there. Nowadays, he didn't go much for gramophone records, suits, cars, and such-like. You couldn't talk to him about anything except the "so-called DDR." I asked him, somewhat intimidated, whether his tone didn't at times remind him of the tone which he'd once said made it impossible for him to read the East Zone newspapers. He said: you have to talk to them in their own language, you know, otherwise they just don't understand you. So I discovered that even to-day there are in East and West Germany a few people who speak the same language. And since the people over there obstinately refuse to learn from us, we are beginning to learn from them.

"And, in the Evening, the East-West Dialogue...."

SOMEONE, in Düsseldorf say, has a startling literary inspiration. Afterwards, a mysterious written something remains which can be read aloud if necessary. Some professor turns up who can supply a critical theoretical basis for this verbal visitation. So the youngster, ravished by his own linguistic facility, appears before a group of Düsseldorfers who happen to have time to spare. And he performs with such confidence that the beautiful incomprehensibility of his "message" goes home to people who are no longer really interested in messages that are comprehensible. It all comes from too much refinement.

Something like that could happen anywhere. Still, if the writer Müller-Berlin and the writer Müller-Garmisch should chance to meet in a Frankfurt house, say, with a crowd of other culture-pundits, then the discussion's bound to come round sooner rather than later to the meeting in Düsseldorf.

Müller-Berlin (whom we ought really to call Müller-Westberlin) feels he must defend the Düsseldorf meeting because such a meeting simply wouldn't be possible in East Berlin. As Müller-Berlin is doing his best for West Berlin, the intellectuals who are standing around in scattered groups begin to prick up their ears. In order not to be misunderstood, Müller-Berlin goes on to deliver his accustomed diatribe against Globke and Strauss. What will Müller-Garmisch say to this? Müller-Berlin's passionate espousal of the cause of freedom provokes Müller-Garmisch to an ill-considered outburst against the well-known Düsseldorf wordsmith. At once, everyone in the room has the feeling: this is an attack on West Berlin. This is felt most strongly, of course, by Müller-Berlin himself. Is Müller-Garmisch really going to defend Socialist Realism, he shouts, and the Wall of Shame? Would he mock the victims who, since August 13th, 1961, have lost their lives at this very Wall of Shame? Müller-Garmisch makes a feeble attempt to suggest that the meeting in Düsseldorf and the Wall be treated separately. He fails, since Müller-Berlin, quick of hearing, proceeds at once to unmask Müller-Garmisch: "'Wall,' he said—why did he say 'Wall,' and not 'Wall of Shame'?" Has Müller-Garmisch any idea of what is at stake in Berlin? Has he *seen* the Wall of Shame? Was he outraged when he saw it? Answer that, please. Was he *outraged*?

Müller-Berlin's emotion is very understandable. Whenever one met him after the 13th of August one was confronted with this emotion. He himself often gave people to understand that

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it was less a question of emotional agitation than of downright fear—fear of the brutalities of the East. He conjured up visions that enabled this fear to be felt vicariously even by those who had never seen the Wall. And Müller-Garmisch? Does he show the required sense of outrage? He does not. Once again he reveals his well-known tendency to indulge in petty distinctions: Communism in the DDR isn't the same as Communism....

He gets no further, because Müller-Berlin breaks in with a sentence of which all that anyone can understand are the words "Teltow Canal." Things get really bad for Müller-Garmisch when he asks how one exhibits the required sense of outrage. May one not enjoy one's beer any more? Does one have to think of it when one is in bed with a girl? A universal howl of disgust silences him. Müller-Berlin dismisses him with a contemptuous gesture and says Müller-Garmisch is just a typical German. No other nation, he says, would allow itself to be divided as do the Germans. And one of his listeners charges in with a quotation from Hölderlin: "Craftsmen you see, but not human beings—thinkers, but not human beings—priests, but not human beings—masters and men, young and old, but not human beings...." Müller-Garmisch is now in a pretty bad way, for this quote from Hölderlin is manifestly aimed at him, because he's refused to register humane outrage. He makes a final attempt to bring the whole discussion back to Düsseldorf, but no one is interested in that any more. Müller-Berlin smiles his pained smile. He actually seems willing to forgive Müller-Garmisch, to give him the benefit of the doubt. But the latter can't accept this from his opponent. Angrily, he begins to argue that the Wall is a political fact. He delves deep into history, piles detail upon detail, from the Unconditional Surrender to the Collectivisation of the Peasants—which he calls "premature"—and is inclined to reject as, on the whole, unsuited to our latitudes.... But whom have the wretched and the oppressed to thank for the very slight improvement in their condition over the past hundred years, if not the Communists? cries Müller-Garmisch. Do the rich ever give up anything voluntarily? And in whom do the wretched and the oppressed put their hopes, in South America and elsewhere in the world?

All around, people are beginning to yawn. Müller-Garmisch is wandering from the point, and Müller-Berlin is now smiling indulgently. He rises to his feet and says: "Thank your lucky stars my wife isn't here! My wife would simply call you a Communist...." Then Müller-Berlin walks away through the crowd. No one dares to hold him back. Only when he is outside do they come milling round him, hoping in some café or other to pump him further, undisturbed by Müller-Garmisch. The only one to remain with Müller-Garmisch, apart from his liberal-minded host, is an elderly goldsmith—a man who, as everybody knows, is absolutely incorrigible, and still has contacts with the East. He is now talking to Müller-Garmisch. Müller-Garmisch doesn't contradict him; but neither does he agree with him. He is said later to have apologised to his host, explaining that he was only really concerned with the Düsseldorf fellow, and the followers a man like that attracts.... That may be, but what remained in our minds was what Frau Müller-Berlin would have said if she'd been there: "Müller-Garmisch is a Communist...."

Still, there are a few German Characteristics....

OUR GERMAN climate dictates that in August we should already be thinking about winter. Time draws attention to itself with swiftly varying seasons. This fear of winter, and the spectacle of the seasons treading so closely on one another's heels, may be responsible for the development of our two talents: for organisation and for speculation. I'm not surprised we're a pious people and easily ruled. Compared with one or two of the Khans, even our worst rulers were not so terribly tyrannical; in fact, they governed rather mildly. We were, I believe, always quite well administered, judged by the standards of the day. That we never killed a king, that revolutions took place in our country at intervals of at least a hundred years, is due to the fact that our tribal Wilhelms did not too cruelly scourge our pious, essentially mediæval people. Luther's Reformation, our only real revolution, had heaven for its goal and not a paradise to be quickly established on earth. It must have been hard enough to implant in the Germans, living in their scattered valleys, an interest in anything political—in a German *Reich*, for example. Indeed, without an enemy it wouldn't have been possible. Faced with a Frenchman, those who were more or less able to understand one another in the

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same mother-tongue had to admit that they had something in common which distinguished them from that-fellow-over-there. Still, Berlin remained a Prussian city. And anyone who went to the *Reichstag* from Mannheim, say, certainly didn't feel wholly German till he went to the theatre in the evening and saw Albert Bassermann playing Schiller. And, of course, when he remembered World War I. But otherwise? The explosive burgeoning of German art in the twenties, with all its metropolitan lustre, can deceive us as to the political reality. Hitler, making use of every German weakness, came to power, as they say, legally. (He too invoked World War I and liked to talk of its having "welded together" the German people.) No doubt of it, Hitler ought to have been liquidated. That he was a criminal was clear to others besides his ten paladins. But even Hitler had to liquidate himself. Perhaps one can't reproach a nation that, for the first time in its history, has fallen victim to a political adventurer. Wilhelm II had been, as it were, a legitimate postscript to the Middle Ages. What had been learned from that failure was not really applicable to Hitler. At least not by a people that had not yet had any political experience and felt no clear need of it. True, the middle class felt itself to be enlightened. But compared with the French or British middle class, the German middle class is still notable for the fact that its political talents are under-developed. In 1912, it was still possible to present the Frenchman and the Socialist to the German bourgeois as the Enemy, and the German bourgeois believed it. He neglected his own development and concentrated his energy on the Enemy. Hitler was able to present the "eternal Jew" and Bolshevism as the Enemy, and was equally successful. To-day, Bolshevism is again presented as the Enemy; and again the bourgeois, now in political control, allows himself to become fixated on this Enemy, thereby missing his own opportunities to develop. How scornfully we smile to-day at the stuffy, outmoded Francophobia of the Wilhelminian Patriot! Not dreaming that our beloved anti-communism may one day turn *us* into similar caricatures! However, before hatred can become a caricature, and ridiculous, a few million people usually have to die. Hatred has to *bleed* to death.

Because we've been a pious people for so long, we find it hard to act as political beings—to act as if we were Englishmen. Our religious talent has come down in the world and now consumes itself in a-political enthusiasms. Anti-communism is only apparently at home in the Church. He who goes for the Enemy with a cross has a weapon in his hand. An ineffectual weapon, by the way. A degenerate religious idea, anti-communism is nevertheless not of this world. It does not amount to a political achievement. It is the sort of thing that comes naturally to us; a hybrid of both worlds.

These, to-day, are our two mitigating circumstances. Confronted with communism each of us sees himself as a Christian. (But we can call ourselves Christians only if we do not think of Jesus Christ. We really have no more to do with him than a divisional padre. Our Christianity is fettered by golden chains and, come Sunday, preaches to thin air.)

Our second mitigating circumstance is the brutally unsuccessful experiment in socialism known as the German Democratic Republic. One look over the Eastern frontier and everyone has a clear conscience and congratulates himself on not being like the fellow on the other side. He is exempted from the strenuous task of working out a future for our society over here. The future is merely a question of the next defence budget. Our third mitigating circumstance: a tradition of some eighty years' standing commands us to regard socialism as something semi-criminal. When we prohibited the Communist Party, we prohibited much more than a small political group that was in any case doomed to failure in our country. We prohibited ourselves thereby from thinking in any future-directed fashion. We use up our energy in negative reactions to the provocation of the Communists. All we can do is to assert the contrary. This would be sensible only if it were established that socialism were such a miserable theory that it is enough always to do the opposite of what socialism does. Our fourth mitigating circumstance: no one is actually hungry, so why change anything at all?

These circumstances inhibit our development towards a truly social democracy. Hence, the mite we have to contribute to the European community is of a cultural nature. Politically, we have had nothing to offer so far but a promise to overcome our past. This promise we have largely kept. But if we want to found our future on something more than defence budgets, we must hope that our political weaknesses will be eliminated by Europeanisation. The more the Germans are absorbed into Europe, the pleasanter it will be to be a German.

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Walter Laqueur

Nazism & the Nazis

On the Difficulties of Discovering the Whole Truth

WHO, OR WHAT, is a Nazi? Legally speaking, a Nazi was a member of the Nationalist Socialist German Workers' Party, founded in Munich on September 20th, 1920, or one of its auxiliary groups. Since it was a very small group, and wanted to appear larger than it really was, it began numbering its members at 500—Hitler's party card was No. 555. By January, 1933, the party had about 1·2 million members; then the great rush started. Two years later the number had doubled, although in April, 1933, restrictions had been imposed to keep out "time-servers" and "opportunists." So the legal definition does not take us very far. In fact, it can be rather misleading, as Allied denazification courts found out after the war. Many thousands in the S.S., the régime's élite guard, had not belonged to the Nazi party. Among the *Waffen* S.S. still fewer had been party members. Heinrich Mueller, appointed head of the Gestapo in 1935, became a member of the party only six or seven years later. On the other hand, some perfectly innocent engineer, who had never been politically active at all, might find himself in serious trouble after 1945, because he had belonged (or been compelled to belong if he didn't want to lose his job) to the association *Deutsche Technik*, a subsidiary of the Nazi party.

To define a Nazi one must define "National Socialism"—a subject about which, almost two decades after the end of the Third Reich, surprisingly little is known. One knows, of course, that it must never happen again. But this ought by now to have been fortified by a closer understanding of the character of Nazism, its motives, components, and structure; one cannot effectively oppose something that remains inexplicable. A young American historian, who specialises in contemporary German history, remarked to me the other day that William Shirer's book on the Third Reich, which has had such a phenomenal success, was "really very bad indeed"; not a "scholarly work"; mistaken in countless details, wrong in its basic theses. I tried hard (but I fear unsuccessfully) to convince him that this was largely the fault of the professional historians. True, there have been some very good monographs, some excellent biographical studies, countless footnotes to the history of Hitler's life and times. But where is the definitive history of the Third Reich, or of the Nazi party? Where is the comprehensive account of how justice came to be perverted in Germany, of how the intellectuals reacted, of how the apparatus of terror worked, of how the German economy was managed? On Italian fascism there is a much smaller literature; yet the subject seems to be more fully covered, since Italian writers have apparently been less inhibited in dealing with it. The difficulties, to be sure, are staggering; only those who have tackled the subject can be fully aware of them. Thousands of people who were in leading positions in the Nazi era are still alive—diplomats, higher civil servants, party leaders, police officials. Their evidence would be invaluable; yet they are most reluctant to talk. The only exception

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is the generals, and some of them have been too garrulous.

LAST YEAR, I went to Munich in the vague hope of locating and interviewing one or two of the leading members of the Nazi party of the very early period. Much to my surprise there were a great many still around; I had forgotten that most of them had been quite young in 1923, so that some of them had not turned seventy. All showed apprehension: "Who told you about me? ... How did you get my address?" My assurance that the local telephone directory had been my only guide set them somewhat at ease. But some remained reluctant to talk; and others presented a version that had undoubtedly been carefully rehearsed over the years, and that was both untruthful and useless.

There is thus a strange and striking contrast between ex-Nazis and ex-Communists. The latter, as a rule, are only too willing to tell one their experiences. I can think of only a handful of former Nazis who have given such personal accounts; most of them were very young at the time and held no influential positions. Their attachment to the party was often less close than that of the Communists; their disillusionment, if it came at all, came only after 1945; there was no radical break while the Party and the *Reich* still existed. These ex-Nazis have done with politics, and are only anxious not to attract attention now. A very few keep the flag flying, hectically justifying the Nazi era in little pamphlets published by obscure neo-Nazi publishing houses; about their own past they remain curiously silent. Perhaps they think the time is not yet ripe; perhaps they have manuscripts hidden away to be published at some future date. But I doubt it. One of the most important sources for the study of Nazism, therefore, remains closed.

The Documents

WHAT ABOUT the Nazi documents? There is certainly no shortage here; the amount of paper produced and preserved by a modern bureaucracy is staggering. Much was destroyed, of course, during the last months of the war, and immediately after; 1945–46 was a hard winter and there was a shortage of fuel. Some of the top secret files were seized, I suspect, in 1945, by people professionally interested in top secret files. Even so, hundreds of tons of paper remain. Some material is not accessible, either because it is in Russian hands or because the Allies or the West Germans have put an embargo on it for the time being. This applies, for instance, to the personal files in the Berlin Document Centre of all former members of the Nazi Party. (I had, for example, great difficulty in getting to see the personal file of Alfred Rosenberg, though Rosenberg has been dead many years.) The reasons are, of course, "political" and not very creditable; but there may be legal complications as well. The embargo is not always effective, however, as copies of material classified in the United States can be found in other files in England and Germany —and *vice versa*.

DESPITE THE LOSSES and restrictions there is still so much that all but the boldest are likely to be awed. The American Historical Society has now been micro-filming for seven or eight years the documents held in Washington, publishing every two or three months a detailed catalogue. The most recent I have seen was No. 39, *Records of the Reich Leader S.S. and the Chief of the German Police (Part III)*—it contains 563 films with, I estimate, between a quarter and half a million pages. In these files there is much that is not, and never will be, of interest to anyone: administrative memos, excerpts from newspapers, an application (in quadruplicate) by Richard Strauss' son-in-law for a hunting licence. Then, suddenly, among a mass of local gossip, pay cheques, requests for compassionate leave by office cleaners, there is a document of absorbing interest and great importance. The last catalogue, for instance, lists a full run of the internal *Gestapo* newspaper, published two or three times a week between 1939 and 1944, and an indispensable source for the internal situation in Germany during the war. There are documents of equal relevance for other European countries.

True, very little can be taken at face value without further checking—which may prove impossible. Three examples, chosen at random, should suffice.

1. A detailed report on the visit to Germany in 1938–39 of a young Englishman—bearer of a well-known name—who is described as "a British fascist." (But the same report also calls him "a member of the British Secret Service"!)

2. This concerns a man now prominent in German political life, an ex-minister who maintains that he was an anti-Nazi: according to this

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document he supplied information to Ribbentrop's private information service. (But, from the document, it is not *absolutely* certain whether he did this knowingly, or whether he was used by others. It is just conceivable that he was playing a "double game.")

3. A Russian officer who fell into German hands in 1942 had some sensational stories to tell about events in the Kremlin in the late thirties. But much in the report is obvious fantasy—he really believes Bukharin was "a German spy." How is one to know whether he is telling the truth in this case?

These three examples are not of great political importance. But there are hundreds of similar cases, and they underline the necessity of great caution.

What has deterred many historians from using these documents is not so much the fear of legal complications, as lack of time. Writers on foreign policy mostly take as their source the published volumes of *Documents on German Policy* edited by teams of British, American, and French historians. Historians concerned with other aspects of Nazi Germany base their researches on the Nuremberg Trial material, which for the most part has not seen the light of day. Much scholarship and industry has gone into editing the *"Documents."* But the editors, for obvious reasons of space, could select only the most important documents on German diplomatic relations with other major countries. This goes for the far more voluminous Nuremberg material too—their editors had to fulfil a specific task, and considering the very short time at their disposal, and their conditions of work, they did an admirable job. But their collection contains only a small fraction of all the relevant material, and it covers only certain aspects of Nazi rule in Germany and Europe.

Fortunately, there have been, and are, some scholars with the urge and the opportunity to study the original documents. Frequently these are men and women on the staff of archives or research institutes—who else has the time to cope with so much material? I am not saying that this surfeit of source material is the most serious obstacle for the study of the Nazi era, but it is certainly a formidable one. Some have doubted the value of this research—are the great effort and industry that go into sifting and analysing this evidence really warranted? Will it produce conclusions likely to affect the general picture that already exists? May it not be a source of confusion rather than clarification? These doubts are not altogether baseless; the number of historians specialising in modern history is limited. Can they afford to lose themselves for years in the minutiæ of some aspect of Nazism? We know, after all, without having reference to the archives, that Hitler was an anti-Semite. And yet, in the end, the only way to shed more light on the whole period is to find what really happened and, perhaps, why it happened. I want to give a few examples.

Revisionists

SEVERAL YEARS ago an American historian published a book about Germany's economic war preparations in which he found that, far from gearing her industry to a totalitarian war economy, Germany had done surprisingly little in this direction before 1939. The facts cannot be disputed—the German industrial war effort reached its maximum output only after Stalingrad. American isolationist historians, and their German adaptors, pounced on this book; was it not decisive proof that Hitler had not really wanted the war? Did it not clear up the question of responsibility for World War II once and for all—Halifax and Beck being the main culprits, not Hitler? The argument is childish. One could argue as well that since Hitler lost the war he cannot have wanted it in the first place. Even an elementary knowledge of Nazism should have shown Messrs. Tansill, Barnes, and Hoggan[1] that Germany's comparative lack of readiness in 1939 was a sign not of Hitler's will to peace, but of his general lack of interest in economic affairs and his belief that German armaments were sufficient for a lightning war—a belief which was painfully close to the truth.

I have recently been exposing myself, as it happens, to a massive dose of "revisionist historiography" on the Third Reich—the writings of German neo-Nazis and ultra-conservatives, American Roosevelt-haters, and also certain British contributions. Much of this literature has been published in Germany, and in Germany only; there is an Institute for German Post-war History and a *Deutsche Hochschullehrerzeitung* in Tübingen which specialise in these publications. It is only fair to add that no reputable German historian would be seen dead in such company, and that the most detailed refutations

[1] David L. Hoggan: *Der erzwungene Krieg* (Tübingen, 1961).

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of the pro-Nazi writings have come from Germany. I admire the enterprise of the German and Swiss historians who have shown in convincing detail on what massive ignorance and wilful suppression of the truth this new literature is based. But I doubt whether a rational discussion will have much effect; one could as well discuss philosophy with Alfred Rosenberg. Those who want to whitewash Hitler will never be at a loss for arguments.

Ordinary mortals are apparently impressed by footnotes; they find it difficult to believe that a book may have a scientific apparatus of fifty pages and yet be a bad joke. Rosenberg's books and those of other Nazi pseudo-historians and philosophers were full of historical references; no serious historians would deign to refute them. There is no danger that the present-day revisionist literature will be taken seriously by members of the profession; the danger is that it will serve effectively as propaganda. In the circumstances it is remarkable how little effect it has had in Germany so far: most of the spade-work has been done by foreigners, not by Germans. In a way this is perhaps not surprising. For most Germans know what really happened; for them Hitler was a living reality. (They may dislike the Poles, but they know that Hitler attacked Poland, and that he was bound to do so—not the other way round.) For American and British revisionist historians, on the other hand, Hitler and his whole system appear to be as strange and remote as some Assyrian king, despite footnotes, quotations, and historical references.

For some Americans of the older generation it is merely a continuation of the quarrel about the responsibility for World War I; for others, it is simply an extension of their vendetta against Roosevelt. There are a few Germans who believe that Hitler's main crime was to be "unlucky." An occasional Englishman probably wants only to shock his audience with paradoxical statements. Of more interest, perhaps, is the Frenchman who was sent by the Hoover Foundation to cover the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt and who was thrown out by the Germans as a neo-Nazi! He had been a socialist, a *Maquisard* from the beginning; arrested by the Gestapo in 1943, he spent two years in a camp. Yet after the war he published a series of books according to which the Nazi crimes had been "grossly exaggerated" if not altogether invented; his writings became the standard fare of the neo-Nazi movement all over Europe. A fascinating case, no doubt, for the student of political psycho-pathology.

Monopoly Capitalism?

LAST YEAR there was a lengthy polemic between the German trade unionists and the Institute of German Industry about the role leading German industrialists and bankers had played in the Third Reich. It generated more heat than light; the trade unions, I believe, had the better of the argument. It was a far cry from the discussions in the 'thirties about Nazism and finance capital; the real force behind fascism, the Communist argument ran then, was "monopoly capitalism." My own favourite was Ernest Henri, whose books attracted a great deal of attention in the 1930s. He was introduced by the *New Statesman* as a German refugee with exceptional sources of information. Actually, he was a Russian. According to Henri's articles and books Fritz Thyssen, the great magnate of the Ruhr, not Adolf Hitler ("Fabius Cunctator") was the prime mover of German fascism. Thyssen was "the inspiration," the "brain of the whole system," the "driving force behind it." Thyssen had given Hitler orders to launch a grandiose offensive. Hitler was but a puppet in the hands of this German tycoon—just as the Italian industrialist, Toeplitz, was Mussolini's master. In fact, Thyssen was rather dim; Hitler would no more have heeded his advice than that of his valet. He was also relatively courageous; in 1939 he broke with Hitler and went into exile; his property was seized, and after the fall of France he was sent to a concentration camp. So much for the "prime mover behind Hitler," and a book that was called by Bertrand Russell at the time "extraordinarily interesting and valuable."

The monopoly-capitalism theory which is still propagated in some quarters to this day—though with decreasing conviction—was not confined to the Communists; many Social Democrats and Liberals subscribed to it. In a more sophisticated form it was advocated in Professor Franz Neumann's famous book entitled *Behemoth*. Its success was not altogether surprising; great catastrophes often appear inexplicable to their contemporaries; they provide fertile ground for advocates of the conspiratorial theory of history. How could a little lawyer from Arras overthrow the monarchy in France without the assistance of the freemasons and the *illuminati*? How

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could Lenin have been successful without the assistance of the Kaiser's agents on one hand, and the Elders of Zion on the other? How could a half-mad Austrian corporal conquer Germany, and almost the whole of Europe, without some sinister and darkly powerful backing? It sounded quite plausible at the time. But since 1945 we know what really happened, and a very different picture emerges. The captains of German industry to whom such far-sightedness, diabolical cunning, and, above all, unity of purpose had been attributed, appear in a very different light. They were limited and short-sighted men; not daring, but spineless toadies. Their self-confidence had disappeared in the great slump; they only wanted to be left alone. To attribute such Machiavellian strategies to them was a pathetic misreading of the situation. They did not make Hitler; they jumped on his bandwagon. (True, some of them had paid Hitler for some years. But far, far more money had gone to the small centre and right-of-centre parties.)

The record of the German captains of industry in the Third Reich is not a pretty one, and it is not improved by the fact that Nazism had support among all classes of German society. The East Germans unearthed and published some time ago a very damaging document about the "Circle of Friends of Heinrich Himmler." This was a group of about thirty leading German bankers and industrialists (and about fifteen leading state and party officials), who met about once a month, were told about the activities of the S.S., and were taken to visit concentration camps on one or two occasions. Himmler's "friends" paid for this privilege—in 1943, for instance, they contributed more than a million marks, which was handed over to Himmler to be used at his own discretion.

What were these privileges for which his "friends" were permitted to pay all that money? They did receive occasional orders from the S.S. (including the supply of cyclone B gas for the death camps). They got slave labour for their factories. But above all they got reinsurance. One of the highest S.S. leaders said about this circle in Nuremberg: "They wanted to have a direct line to Himmler for emergencies, such as when the Gestapo made trouble in their factories." The omnipotent German monopolists were paying Danegeld, protection money for the privilege of not being molested by the political police....

The issue at stake is not the record of German industry, which was very bad; after 1933 they did all they could to ingratiate themselves with the new masters. There was some resistance to Hitler among the working class, and less frequently among the middle class and the aristocracy. There was no such opposition from the industrialists; the only one who openly disagreed with Hitler was, ironically enough, Fritz Thyssen. German industry collaborated with Hitler—about this there can be no two opinions. The régime did great favours to some of them and they reciprocated by loyally serving it. But was their help decisive in bringing Hitler to power? Did they at any stage in the Third Reich influence Hitler's policy? On this too there can be no two opinions; they were never asked whether they wanted the war or how it would affect their profits. The myth of an all-powerful monopoly capitalism disappears into thin air. It was based on the false assumption that, to put it in its most primitive form, economics determines politics in the totalitarian state. We now know, beyond a shadow of doubt, that the relationship between political and economic power was exactly opposite: the state made the economy subservient to its own non-economic purposes—such as war and armed aggression.

The Resistance

"HITLER was a very ordinary German. The Nazis were Germans. They won more votes at a free election than any other German party ever received.... The German resistance was a myth." Thus Mr. A. J. P. Taylor in a recent pronouncement. Of course, nobody has ever argued that the Nazis were not Germans. But Hitler was definitely not "a very ordinary German." Nor did the Nazis obtain the highest *percentage* of votes before 1933—the Social Democrats in 1919 did better.

What, then, of the German resistance? How many troop transports or deportation trains were derailed? How many S.S. men were killed inside Germany? These questions (put by Mr. Taylor) have to be faced by the Germans. Again: how many Germans were arrested under Hitler? According to Gestapo files, the number of persons arrested and held in prisons and concentration camps for political reasons in April, 1939, was 301,000. Thousands were executed—well before 1944. Among them were dissident Nazis, and unpolitical persons who had been seized following mere suspicion or a denuncia-

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tion. A few were Jews, considered enemies of the régime anyway. But three hundred thousand is a large figure; it is not "a myth."

The history of German opposition to Hitler, like so much else in the Third Reich, remains to be written. There are a great many books on individual people and groups, but no objective study putting the whole phenomenon in wider perspective. West German accounts frequently ignore the Communists' share; in Professor Hans Rothfels' scholarly study of *The German Opposition to Hitler*,[2] one looks in vain for a just appraisal. Yet the Communists were very active, and credit should be given where it is due—even if it took them a long time to realise that Hitler, and not the Social Democrats, was their "main enemy," and even if they virtually closed down shop between the '39–'41 time of the Hitler-Stalin pact. The Gestapo reports show that among these anonymous people, the rank-and-file militants, there were indeed real heroes, whose memory should not be forgotten. It was, relatively, easier to be a resister in France and Yugoslavia; we should remember what it meant in Germany.

Sodom and Gomorrah, we are told, would have been saved by the presence of ten just men. There were many more than that in Germany, but historical dimensions have changed; on the day of judgment their number was found insufficient. Yet respect should be paid to all who did resist, even if the Communists do not make it easy for the rest.

AMONG THE MANY GAPS in the annals of German resistance, that left by the intellectuals is probably the largest. Or is it merely the most conspicuous because they were unlucky enough to put their views and feelings on paper, while no records exist of the opinions of others? An otherwise not very distinguished German littérateur wrote in February, 1933: "The dictatorship does not need to give them orders, they stand to attention of their own volition. They began marching even before they got the order. They write what is expected of them." Re-reading the enthusiastic declarations, the exultant manifestos of German intellectuals in 1933, one can find few mitigating circumstances, apart perhaps from the fact that the stand of writers such as Thomas Mann, Jakob Wasserman, René Schickele, who for a variety of reasons had already been rejected by the régime, was not exactly heroic at that time. But what about 1939, what about 1944? The literary supplement of Dr. Goebbels' weekly *Das Reich* during the war years reads like a roll-call of the "Other Germany." True enough, these non-committed writers were deliberately cultivated by the propaganda ministry; there was temptation—but they were too easy victims. There were a few German bishops, some generals, there were even German judges who showed courage. But how many writers decided to cultivate their garden rather than serve the régime? Not long ago the Anglo-American public was treated to a book on problems of contemporary history by a German writer who had not been a Nazi and who explained that treason and resistance were really very relative things, with no moral absolutes involved. I am not certain whether the message was fully understood; the book received very good reviews over here. This same author had been a distinguished contributor on Goebbels' own paper—not in January, 1933, but in December, 1944, many months after the July revolt which should have settled the remaining doubts of any thinking German. What made her do this? Would she have been shot had she refused to contribute? Was she asked to contribute, or did she volunteer? But singling her out is grossly unfair; it is like fastening the blame for the defeat of an army on a confused private—who probably did not even know how he came to be on the field of battle.

MY POINT OF DEPARTURE was how to define Nazism. What made people join this movement? The term Nazism (or fascism) has been used rather indiscriminately over the past decades, and particularly since the war. A great many people have been called "fascists" by their political opponents: Greek kings and Austrian chancellors, Polish marshals, French generals, and Latin American adventurers, the Pope, Sigmund Freud, Trotsky, and Stalin. Recently a group of Nuclear Disarmers who spent a night at a police station complained about "Gestapo methods" and "concentration camps" because the mattresses were not soft enough. The letter of a lady who wrote nonsense about birth-control is likened to a "Hitlerian manifesto." A literary critic who offended a poet is denounced as a fascist.

It makes one wince, but perhaps it is only

[2] Hans Rothfels: *The German Opposition to Hitler* (Oswald Wolff, London, 1961).

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natural; Nazism has receded into the distant past, it remains as a figure of speech. Historians and political scientists, let alone propagandists, have been somewhat too liberal with the Nazi label. There has been a tendency to dub any régime that persecutes the opposition "fascist"; and if such a government also uses a certain amount of social demagoguery, there is no doubt about its "fascist character." In consequence, the decisive difference between fascist régimes on one hand, and military dictatorships and authoritarian governments on the other, is more and more overlooked. Hardly anybody bothers any more to ask whether it is really very helpful to use one and the same term to define both Hitler's Germany and Italy under Mussolini. Yet there were essential differences between the two régimes: the one ripened into full totalitarianism, whereas the other had to coexist with the monarchy and the church. Some have suggested that we ought to differentiate between "left-wing, centrist, and right-wing" fascism. There is something to be said for such an exercise; but it is not certain whether it takes us very far. So-called left-wing fascism may be closer in inspiration (and in policies) to left-wing parties than to right-wing fascism which is nothing but the extreme fringe of traditional conservatism. There is no "ideal type" fascism that can serve as a yardstick for all fascist movements.

If Nazism had been nothing but a conspiracy among millions of criminals our task would be much easier. Its leaders were a singularly unattractive lot, devoid of moral scruples. There was a fair percentage of gangsters (but then the gangsters proved, as a rule, "more human" than the bureaucrats like Heinrich Himmler). Some anti-Nazis have never quite understood this—Bertolt Brecht, for instance.

Arturo Ui, in Brecht's play, is the leader of a little gang in Chicago which runs a protection racket among the local greengrocers. After a short while, he and his cronies establish mastery over the cauliflower trade, having terrorised all their opponents into submission. Their only aim is "cutting their slice of meat out of any cow that the good God has made." Amusing, perhaps, but nothing could be more misleading than this image of Nazism. For Nazism was not only terror. A movement for which millions of people were willing to fight and to die cannot be explained in terms of Al Capone and Jack "Legs" Diamond. There have been many gangsters, but there was only one Hitler; Brecht's formula does not explain the success of the Nazi movement, the enthusiasm it generated, the lack of resistance to it. Among the young people who joined the Nazi movement during the early years there were not a few idealists. Much later, a young man who had resisted the temptation described the dilemma facing his contemporaries:

> If only a few took up a clear position and maintained it, this was not because resistance was so

Past & Present

THE *German attitudes towards past and present have radically changed over the last decade, according to the most recent poll conducted by the "Institut für Demoskopie" (Allensbach).*

Six years after the end of the war—in the year 1951—"the time in which things went best for Germany" was identified by 42 per cent as the years between 1933 and 1939, i.e., the Nazi "peace years." Altogether, 94 per cent looked backward, to Weimar, to the Kaiser, in "remembrance of things past."

Eight years later, in 1959, the replies to the question, "When in this century do you feel things went best for Germany?" indicated that 42 per cent now felt that "Heute" (to-day, now) was best. Even the myth of the "Kaiserzeit" began to fade.

This trend has continued. The latest poll (conducted at the end of 1963) reveals that the positive feeling for the present has grown to 62 per cent. (The backward-looking figure is now 32 per cent.) The Institut notes that the partition of Germany into two states is a factor in the relatively hesitant German reconciliation with the present. This was suggested by a comparison with the Austrian results of a similar poll. In 1961, in reply to a question about "when in this century things went best for Austria," 82 per cent replied "die Gegenwart" (the present).

QUESTION: "*When in this century do you feel things went best for Germany?*"

	October 1951 %	*June* 1959 %	*End* 1963 %
IN THE PRESENT, TODAY	2	42	62
WORLD WAR II	—	—	1
BETWEEN 1933–1939	42	18	10
BETWEEN 1920–1932 (WEIMAR REPUBLIC)	7	4	5
BEFORE 1914 (THE KAISER-REICH)	45	28	16
DON'T KNOW	4	8	6
	100	100	100

Institut für Demoskopie (Allensbach, January 1964)

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impossible; the fact was that National Socialism offered all that a young man in his most secret and proudest imagination would desire—activity, responsibility for his fellows, and work with equally enthusiastic comrades for a greater and stronger fatherland. It held out official recognition, and careers that had been unthinkable before; while on the other side there were only difficulties and dangers, an empty future and heart-rending doubts.

Everybody agreed that Germany was a "cruelly oppressed" country, that it had been "most unjustly treated" in Versailles in 1919, that it ought to get back some of "the lost territories," that reparations were mere "exploitation." We tend to dismiss these grievances as manifestations of aggressive German militarism. But at the time all Liberals and Socialists and Communists, including most left-wingers in England and America, supported these demands. And so millions of young Germans gave their support to the leaders of what they thought was a National Revolution. Some had misgivings about the terroristic character of the Nazi movement, or its hostility to the Church. Some regretted its extreme anti-Semitism. But few were greatly worried, and who was going to fight for democracy or the Jews anyway? These were seen as minor blemishes in the great movement towards Germany's rebirth. Nazism was dangerous precisely because it appealed not only to the meanest instincts. It was temptation on the grand scale. The Germans' ancestors would have been more sceptical; in the mediæval theatre Antichrist used to appear in the guise of Christ the better to deceive the folk.

DOZENS OF ATTEMPTS to "explain" Nazism have been made in our time by Liberals and Conservatives, Socialists and Communists, Jews and Catholics, psychoanalysts and sociologists. Almost all of them contain a grain of truth, however small. My own feeling is that the earliest correct assessments of Nazism came not from political parties but from individuals who had no preconceived thesis to defend or to prove—this, at any rate, is what emerges from a study of the contemporary literature. Only very recently has an attempt been made to integrate all that is of value in the various interpretations of Nazism. One day, perhaps, we shall all be of one mind. Meanwhile there should be unanimity on the fact that Nazism was not just a "right-wing dictatorship," but had a very distinct character of its own. It was reactionary, but not really conservative; in its own perverse and inhuman way it did want to change the world. It was profoundly anti-Marxist and yet used methods similar to (and sometimes identical with) those of its enemies, sharing their enmity to liberal democracy. A huge variety of motives made people join the Nazi party. In the last analysis, the main source of the evil was moral relativism and indifference: the plain fact that too many people in Germany were unable, or unwilling, to differentiate between right and wrong. It was the classical state of sin as the Greeks would have seen it: sin being the result of *hubris*, *hubris* producing *ate*, that state of moral blindness in which "the evil appears good."

Nazism came into being in particular conditions and at a specific time; these have passed, and with them the chance of a comeback. To say this is not to advocate complacency or a lessening of that eternal vigilance which is said to be the price of liberty. But misplaced vigilance is not a virtue. Brutal and inhuman dictatorships will recur, but they are unlikely to owe their inspiration to Nazism. Neither by accident nor "by popular demand" will there be a repeat performance.

Front Garden

Resting its wings on a bough
the blackbird forgot how to fly,
when the keys rattled
before the door was unlocked.
Those blackbird eyes
guess who will open it.
Voices enough are ringing
down the corridors.

Günter Eich

translated by Michael Hamburger

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Saxons & Anglo-Saxons

1714

THESE *damned English oysters have such a strange taste!*

KING GEORGE I

1782

IT IS NOT AT ALL *uncommon to see [in Parliament] a member lying stretched out on one of the benches, while others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges, or whatever else is in season. There is no end to their going in and out; and as often as anyone wishes to go out, he places himself before the Speaker, and makes him his bow, as if, like a schoolboy, he asked his tutor's permission. The little less than downright open abuse, and the many really rude things, which the members said to each other, struck me much.... In Oxford, I took all the pains in my power to recommend myself to my company, and in the course of conversation, I gave them as good an account as I could of our German Universities, neither denying nor concealing, that, now and then, we had riots and disturbances. "O, we are very unruly, here too," said one of the clergymen, as he took a hearty draught out of his pot of beer, and knocked on the table with his hand....*

PASTOR MORITZ

1791

FROM THE HIGH OPINION *which the English entertain of their country, and of their nation, it may be explained, why they adhere to their old customs so much, and to certain habits; perhaps, for no other reason, but because they have been told, from their infancy, that nothing is so good and so perfect as Old England. Hence many think their constitution, and their government, which, notwithstanding all its pre-eminence and merits, has visible defects, the most perfect of all governments, and above all improvement. Hence the bulk of the people are fully persuaded, that nothing is so delicious and so excellent, as an enormous piece of beef, half-roasted, and a plum-pudding of ten pounds weight. Hence an Englishman will, during the severest weather, rather shiver at the side of a chimney, which consumes a deal of coals, produces clouds of ashes, and blackens the room, than make use of the better sort of stoves, or ovens, which we use in our country: for his ancestors styled a fire a sort of company; they spoiled their eyes by looking thoughtfully at it; and he must do the same.*

FREDERICK WENDERBORN

1797

I HOPE *you [Ludwig Tieck] will prove among other things in your "Letters on Shakespeare" that Shakespeare was no Englishman. How did he get among those cold, stupid souls on that brutal island? Evidently they must at that time have had more human feeling and poetic sensibility than they have to-day.*

AUGUST WILHELM VON SCHLEGEL

1827

I HAVE SEEN *the most astounding thing that the world can show to the amazed eye of man. I have seen it and am still astonished. Fixed in my memory is this stone world of houses, and, in between, the urgent stream of living human faces, with all their gay passions, with all their horrifying flurry of love and hunger and hate—I mean London.*

Send a philosopher to London, but not a poet. Send a philosopher here and place him at a corner of Cheapside; he will learn here more than from all the books of the last Leipzig Fair....

But do not send a poet to London. The bleak seriousness of everything, the colossal uniformity, the machine-like movement, the peevishness of even joy—this over-driven London oppresses the fancy and tears the heart.

HEINRICH HEINE

1832

THE ENGLISH *character is basically a German character, ennobled by liberty, but corrupted by climate and prosperity.*

KARL JULIUS WEBER

1833

SCHILLER'S *blank verse is bad. He moves in it as a fly in a glue-bottle. His thoughts have their connection and variety, it is true, but there is no sufficiently corresponding movement in the verse. How different from Shakespeare's endless rhythms!*

There is a nimiety—a too-muchness—in all Germans. It is the national fault.

COLERIDGE

1871

EXCESSIVELY GOOD *people are—speaking socially—angular. Take, for instance, the Prussians; they are saints compared with the French. They have every sort of excellence; they are honest, sober, hard-working, well-instructed, brave, good sons, husbands, and fathers; and yet all this is spoilt by one single fault—they are insupportable. Laugh at the French, abuse them as one may, it is impossible to help liking them. Admire, respect the Prussians as one may, it is impossible to help disliking them. I will venture to say it would be impossible to find 100 Germans born south of the Main who would declare, on their honour, that they prefer a Prussian to a Frenchman. The only Prussian I ever knew who was an agreeable man was Bismarck. All others with whom I have been thrown—and I have lived for years in Germany—were proud as Scotchmen, cold as New Englanders, and touchy as only Prussians can be. I once had a friend among them. His name was Buckenbrock. Inadvertently I called him Butterbrod. We have never spoken since.*

HENRY LABOUCHERE

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Five Poems by Günter Grass

Askesis

The cat speaks.
And what does the cat say?
Thou shalt sharply pencil shade
over brides and over snow,
thou shalt live the colour grey
and be beneath a cloudy sky.

The cat speaks.
And what does the cat say?
Thou shalt be clad in the evening paper,
clad in sackcloth like potatoes,
and thou shalt turn this suit year out year in,
and in a new suit never be.

The cat speaks.
And what does the cat say?
Thou shouldst scratch the navy out;
cherries, poppy, bloody nose
thou shalt scratch out, that flag as well,
and daub geraniums with ash.

Thou, the cat goes on to say,
shalt live on kidneys, spleen and liver,
lung that's out of breath and sour,
urine of kidneys, undiluted,
on old spleen and tough liver
out of a grey pot: live on that.

And on the wall, where earlier without pause
the ruminant green picture chewed its green,
thou shalt write with thy sharp pencil
this: ASKESIS; write ASKESIS.
That's what the cat says: write ASKESIS.

translated by Christopher Middleton

Happiness

An empty bus
hurtles through the night stripped bare of stars.
Perhaps the driver is singing
and is happy because he sings.

Normandy

The pillboxes on the beach
cannot get rid of their concrete.
At times a moribund general
arrives and strokes the loopholes.
Or tourists come to spend
five agonised minutes—
wind, sand, paper and urine:
the invasion goes on.

The Sea Battle

An American aircraft carrier
and a Gothic cathedral
simultaneously sank each other
in the middle of the Pacific.
To the last
the young curate played on the organ.—
Now aeroplanes and angels hang in the air
and have nowhere to land.

translated by Michael Hamburger

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Chefs and Spoons

And some will say: a chef's a chef.
All newly laundered, starched and spry
in snowfall or against a wall
that's whitewashed, chefs escape the eye
and then the spoons they hold are all
that stirs us, leaves us in no doubt:
the things we eat, the chefs dish out.

I don't think we should talk of soup
—the cabbage stock is neither here nor there—
for hunger is mere pretext for a beer,
and glut licks large and small spoons out of shape
and sits and counts the paces to the door.

The dolls outlive themselves
the rooster dies before the chef
and crows elsewhere, and yet at times
the window panes will shiver in this town.
the dolls outlive themselves,
the rooster dies before the chef.

Flesh is the cause, a chef lives but in spirit.
Time passes, but the beef is still not done,
will last till later, till you sleep,
between your teeth will creep and lurk;
flesh is the cause, a chef lives but in spirit.

They both lay down, each one of them lay down
together in the spoon they both lay down,
for it was hollow and it promised sleep—
yet hollow too was pretext and mere contradiction—
their sleep was short, and shortly before the boiling over,
both, and now each one lay alone,
the self-same spoon skimmed off.

No death is here but leads back to the spoon,
and no love here but, hollowed out, at last
suffers from spoons and trembles in the spoon,
revolves, revolves round what, since everything
with spoons revolves round spoons and only spoons.

Then stay, spoon, go.
To whom spoon, spoon leads where.
What time spoon, spoon was late.
Who stirs me, stirs me where.
Over and over cuts whose hair.
Then stay, spoon, go—and do not tell me where.

So gradually you learn to tell the spoons apart,
no longer can avoid yourself in draws,
Spoon with the rest and like to be mistaken,
act tinny and assimilate yourself,
can hear your neighbour, never meant to eavesdrop,
yet spoon fits into spoon, lies close to spoon.

translated by Michael Hamburger

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Ralf Dahrendorf

The New Germanies

Restoration, Revolution, Reconstruction

IT IS OFTEN taken for granted that the German history of the past hundred years is a sequence of discontinuities. To look for consistency in modern German history, let alone a guiding principle, seems hopeless in view of the extreme changes in her political make-up. But it is always risky to confuse the letter of a Constitution with "legal reality," to confuse political institutions with the social structure on which they are based. For, on closer inspection, the changes in German *society* in the course of the last century—as against Germany's political institutions—do indeed reveal a consistent and recognisable principle. The history of German society since the mid-19th century can be understood as a painful—sometimes slow, sometimes more rapid—but persistent movement towards modernity and away from the traditional authoritarian structures of pre-Enlightenment and pre-industrial days. Kant's famous definition of the Enlightenment —"the German's escape from his self-caused backwardness"—might not be a bad description of German social development over the last century, were it not that a neat formula of this kind extenuates the suffering, the violence, and the terror that were involved.

To-day German social historians tend to agree with Thorstein Veblen's thesis (put forward as early as 1915) that modern German society must be understood in terms of the peculiar form the process of industrialisation assumed in Germany. Whereas in Britain and France the industrial revolution was accompanied, or even preceded, by a bourgeois revolution, Germany's famous "revolution from within" (as Heine was the first to call it)—*i.e.*, German Idealism—proved a poor substitute for the power-claims successfully advanced elsewhere by a self-confident bourgeoisie. Germany's rapid industrialisation—in three waves during the 1850s, 1870s, and 1890s—did not lead to the social and political hegemony of a new entrepreneurial class. Instead, an older ruling class—largely Prussian, consisting of aristocratic civil servants, officers, diplomats and landowners—strengthened its position. There were economic reasons for this —*e.g.* the development of agricultural prices—but the causes of this surprising development were, above all, social. Members of the new entrepreneurial class were less interested in being represented in Parliament than in receiving the honorary title of *Leutnant* on their 60th birthdays—in being able to document, with a *"von"* before their name, that they had found recognition in the eyes of the old upper class. It is typical of this development that the science of Political Economy was transformed, in Germany, into something called *Nationalökonomie*, and that German liberals became known as National Liberals. If by "capitalism" we understand the social and political predominance of the private entrepreneur, industrial Germany in the late 19th century was not capitalist, but presented rather the paradox of a feudal-industrial society.

THIS ODD COMBINATION of modernity in economic affairs and backwardness in social affairs—unique at the time—had important political

DR. RALF DAHRENDORF *is one of the leading young sociologists in Germany, and holds a chair at the University of Tübingen. He was born in Hamburg in 1929, the son of a well-known German Social Democrat; both were arrested after the 20th of July, 1944, and put into a concentration camp. He is the author of a book on Marx and several studies in political sociology.*

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effects. Representative government was the indispensable instrument for a bourgeoisie advancing a claim to power. Only by equal representation could it hope to make its voice heard. Equal representation, and the counterplay of government and opposition, were therefore the formal expression of its will-to-power. But the German bourgeoisie did not advance a claim to political power. Rather, it permitted the authoritarian state to survive industrialisation: a state resting on the assumption that certain individuals, by virtue of very special insight, and guided by the "well-understood interests" of their subjects, are called upon to make all the political decisions. Not without reason has this state been described as "paternalistic": as in the Wilhelminian family, the authority of the father, harsh in punishment but genuinely concerned with the welfare of his subjects, was all-pervading.

Still, whatever the merits of a sketch of this kind, it is bound to mislead. It misconstrues reality, partly by over-simplifying it, but even more because it reduces a dynamic historical process to a static picture. In point of fact, this strange combination of an industrial economy with feudal values and authoritarian structures did not go unchallenged even in Imperial Germany. But the process of dismantling this combination and replacing "traditional" by "rational" values, authoritarian by modern institutions, remained extremely slow. The attempt, in 1918–19, to catch up with the bourgeois revolution after the completion of industrialisation (and to combine it with the anticipated proletarian revolution) failed because the old ruling class and its values, though damaged, had been by no means destroyed by the "revolution of 1918." As soon as the Weimar Republic found itself in trouble—whether in the field of foreign affairs, economic policy, or internal order—there arose a call for the "proven" authoritarian leaders of the past. The Hindenburg elections, government by emergency decree, the coalition of Hitler's first cabinet—all bear witness to this tendency. It is a commonplace that Hitler, too, was carried to power on the waves of this prevailing anti-parliamentarianism.

But it was, and is, an error to identify anti-parliamentarianism with National Socialism. Hitler and his party did not represent the Prusso-German tradition of the authoritarian welfare state. National Socialism marks the entry into German history of "modern politics"—in its ugliest, totalitarian form. In their impact on German society, one might say, the Nazis were the executors of the German revolution that never took place. As so often, the horrors of revolution grew with belatedness. Still, National Socialism completed for Germany the break with those traditional authoritarian values, institutions, and leaders which had characterised German society throughout the period of industrialisation. The most obvious evidence of the revolutionary impact of the Nazi régime is the near-total destruction of the old Prusso-German upper class—through the rise of a party élite of "new men"; through the disappearance of Prussia as a political and administrative entity; through the death of almost an entire generation of young officers from old aristocratic families in the campaigns of the first years of the war; through the systematic liquidation of the old German upper class after the revolt of July 20th, 1944; and finally through the destruction of the economic basis of the old élite as a result of the division of Germany. All these events can be seen as stepping-stones in the painful journey of German society out of a traditional, authoritarian past into modern political reality.

THE CONTRADICTION, then, between a modern industrial economy and a pre-industrial—or, at least, pre-capitalist—structure of society, dominated some seven decades of German history.

Not until 1945 was the contradiction fully resolved (if one can say this without cynicism), in the *tabula rasa* situation of a country whose economic capacity had fallen back to an almost pre-industrial state, at precisely the moment its traditional economic and social structure had lost its basis. Thus, German social development in the post-war era was fraught with several alternative possibilities—the only possibility that was ruled out was a reconstruction of that authoritarian tradition which, even in the Weimar Republic, was still the strength as well as the weakness of the country. One often hears to-day, in East and West Germany, references to "authoritarian" traits in politics and society. But if the term is used at all precisely, it can refer only to fast-vanishing remnants of a lost past. German social development in the post-war era is in no sense a "restoration": it is a road to new destinations.

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FOR SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS, the most important change may well seem one which has little to do with these social developments —I mean, of course, the division of Germany. And, beyond that, the fact that while both halves have turned away from the older traditions, they have turned in radically different directions. In a sense, of course, a unitary German society within set territorial boundaries is itself less than a century old. But the divergences in the recent development of East and West Germany are starker even than were the divergences between the German states before the creation of the Empire in 1871. Despite the official hostility, one cannot overlook a certain inner convergence of these German states in the 18th and 19th centuries. But to-day, official hostility is reflected in a real divergence of social development. Before 1871, there were several German states—but one German society. To-day we may still insist that there are not two German states. But even the most enthusiastic advocates of reunification would find it difficult to deny the existence of two German societies.

In 1945, both halves of Germany faced much the same challenge. The economy was in desperate straits; no able and self-confident group of leaders was in sight; all traditional rules of social and political behaviour had lost their validity. Yet, from the first day of reconstruction, the response to the challenge differed radically in the two halves of Germany. There were, to be sure, differences between the Western zones of occupation as well—some of which are noticeable, even to-day, in the appearance of cities, in the peculiar features of institutions such as the press or local government. But these differences are as nothing compared to the profound contrast between the Eastern and the Western Zones. What started out as the influence of the occupying powers soon merged with more or less indigenous forces and traditions, as the Western Zones grew into the German Federal Republic, the Eastern Zone into the German Democratic Republic. Whatever one may think of the legitimacy of the two governments—and although no democrat will hesitate to choose the Federal Republic—it becomes ever harder to deny the reality of these two political entities and their social bases.

These are historical events of some consequence, concerning even those not directly involved in them. The question is: whether the texture of German society before 1945 has proved strong enough to impose its unifying tradition on a divided Germany, or whether external force can so determine the course of history that a society grown together over many decades can be torn apart within fifteen years. Nor can we shirk the question whether German reunification is not becoming an increasingly remote hope as the two halves stabilise their differences. Whatever the answers to these burning (and rarely discussed) questions, the fact remains that since 1945 the two halves of Germany have grown apart socially as well as politically. For both, Germany's authoritarian tradition came to an end with the National Socialist revolution. In the East, the resulting vacuum was filled by totalitarian institutions and the new social structure supporting them. Whereas the West, with its new social and political institutions, launched the first successful experiment in liberal representative government in German history.

EVEN BEFORE the Berlin Wall, it was not enough to judge East German developments merely from the fluctuating refugee statistics. Of course, these figures did register changes in political pressure, and pointed to the basic lack of legitimacy of the current political order. Nevertheless, the fact is that most of those whose home was in East Germany are still living there, and would still be living there even if they had a chance to leave. Obviously, people's unreadiness to leave does not necessarily imply recognition of a régime. But, at least in its consequences, the absence of active protest is a kind of acceptance. And in this sense—not to speak of the many whose career depends on the present political set-up in the East—the political and social development of East Germany since the war has a more than ephemeral reality.

The most important single feature of East German social development has been the emergence, or rather the systematic creation, of a new and homogeneous upper class. In amusing contrast with their ruling Marxist ideology, the Soviet occupation forces and their German satellites have reconstructed East German society from its "superstructure" rather than from its "real basis." For, however loath one is to explain historical events in conspiratorial terms, there can be little doubt that this process was the result of deliberate planning. As early as May,

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Four Questions

Which Freedom? *A survey, conducted regularly by the German Gallup Institute* (EMNID) *posed a question on the "Four Freedoms" as formulated in the Atlantic Charter—freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom from fear, freedom from want.*

> ***"Which of the four basic freedoms do you personally consider the most important?"***

The last result available (1963) lists 56 per cent (of the usual "representative sample" of 2,000) for "freedom of speech." Only 15 per cent named freedom from want, 14 per cent religious freedom, and 10 per cent freedom from fear. Notable in the social breakdowns was the relative absence of women among the supporters of "freedom of speech"; there was also a clear correlation discernible here among the age groups (16–25: 58 per cent . . . 25–30: 52 per cent . . . 30–50: 50 per cent . . . 50–65: 40 per cent . . . 65 and over: 34 per cent).

Most important Freedom	1949 %	1954 %	1958 %	1962 %	1963 %
FREEDOM OF WORSHIP	12	16	16	13	14
FREEDOM OF SPEECH	26	32	44	47	56
FREEDOM FROM FEAR	17	17	10	8	10
FREEDOM FROM WANT	35	35	28	17	15
NO COMMENT	10	—	2	15	5
	100	100	100	100	100

A similar inquiry was conducted in Greece in October, 1962. The results—from which the not surprising conclusion was reached that "for the Greek population the concern for freedom 'from fear and want' plays a very much larger role than in Western Germany"—listed "Worship: 12 per cent . . . Speech: 32 per cent . . . Fear: 24 per cent . . . Poverty: 26 per cent. . . ." Still, one does remain surprised at the relative German indifference to-day to the prospects of "want" (are the images of inflation, depression, and post-war hardship no longer vivid?) and to the dangers of "fear" (almost as if Gestapo and G.P.U. were quite forgotten).

Foreign Language? *The results of a survey suggested that every fifth West German citizen could "make himself understood" in English, every tenth in French.*

> ***"Do you speak one or more foreign languages well enough to make yourself understood?"***

Among the youth there was a preponderance of "English"—almost one in three of the 16–21 age-group could speak it. Knowledge of French was concentrated mainly in the older age-groups. The correlation with income was very strong, and even stronger, of course, with education.

Language	1958 %	1963 %
ENGLISH	15	19
FRENCH	8	10
RUSSIAN	1	3
OTHER LANGUAGES	5	6
NONE, OR NO RESPONSE	79	74

"A Man Like Hitler." *Each year an inquiry has been made into the attitudes towards Adolf Hitler as registered by a "representative cross-section of the West German population."*

> ***"If to-day—as in 1933—you were faced with a choice of voting for or against a man like Hitler, how would you decide?"***

An overwhelming majority (1963)—namely, 77 per cent—answered "against Hitler." Five per cent would have voted for him to-day; 18 per cent had no clear decision to offer.

This poll has been conducted regularly since 1953. The highest percentages in favour of "a man like Hitler" were 15 per cent in the years 1954 and 1957. In 1958 this fell to 10 per cent. Since 1960 it has been 5 per cent or less. No connections could be established between the attitudes of "for/against" and age, youth, class, or any of the other usual social categories.

"Pressure Group." *An inquiry was made last year which suggested that the big businessman, the Catholic Church, and the trade unions were felt by a majority of the West German population to have "too much influence" on events in the* Bundesrepublik.

> ***"Are you of the opinion that the following groups in West Germany have more influence, less influence, or just the right or proper amount of influence, that is due them?"***

	Too much influence	Too little influence	Proper influence	Unclear, undecided	
PROTESTANT CHURCH	10	26	48	16	100
TRADE UNIONS	51	14	25	10	100
JEWS	20	21	26	33	100
CATHOLIC CHURCH	61	8	22	9	100
BANKERS/INDUSTRIALISTS	71	7	13	9	100
FREEMASONS	14	19	18	49	100
AGRICULTURAL LOBBIES	31	28	26	15	100
REFUGEE ORGANISATIONS	28	25	31	16	100

Noteworthy were the strikingly high figures for the "no answers" or "no opinion" on the Freemasons and the Jews. The public in fact know very little about Freemasonry and the activities of the various lodges. Equally vague, apparently, is its notion of what role the few thousand Jews who still live to-day in West Germany play in social life. Interesting that only one in ten said that the Protestant "pressure groups" had "too much" influence—and only one in ten said the Catholics had "too little."

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1945, the Soviet authorities began to build up a new political and economic élite. The leaders of the four original parties (Communists—KPD; Social Democrats—SPD; Christian Democrats—CDU; Liberal Democrats—LDP) differed considerably in social background and political orientation. In the beginning there was, moreover, an administrative élite of experts; and many sections of society were not immediately affected by the changes at all. But within a year, in the spring of 1946, the second stage in the formation of a closed political élite had begun with the systematic exclusion of "difficult" groups and individuals. There were early indications of this trend in the so-called "Anti-fascist Front of Democratic Unity." There was the compulsory fusion of the Communist and Social Democratic parties into the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in 1946. A little later came the systematic subversion of the so-called bourgeois parties (CDU and LDP), as well as the creation of a number of satellite parties of the SED (the National Democratic Party, the Peasants' Union, etc.). Since about 1948, East Germany has possessed an increasingly homogeneous political class, fundamentally united in outlook, despite the surface appearance of organisational variety.

A SIMILAR PROCESS—if with a different intention—was very nearly brought about by the Nazis during the twelve years of their rule. What is new in East Germany, and perhaps of lasting importance, is the next step in the creation of a ruling class. Since 1948, if not earlier, there has been a clearly recognisable attempt to combine all the élites of society—politicians, the military, lawyers, professors, economic leaders, and artists (and, in the end, church leaders as well)—into a uniform "new class." This has not proved equally easy in all cases; even to-day the process is by no means complete. But we have to recognise that the creation of a homogeneous ruling class in East Germany has been largely realised. Nationalisation of all private firms has turned managers into state functionaries. In the reconstruction of the Army, the officer corps proper had almost no say (though here, too, certain traditions of the German army are likely to impede its complete *Gleichschaltung*). The abolition of most of the university faculties of law, and the invention of the "People's Judge," meant a break with one of the central institutions of German tradition (though the common historical background of the legal systems remains a unifying factor even to-day). The complete switch-over of education to a system of "polytechnical education," and the privileged position of real and so-called "workers and peasants," as well as the general indoctrination with Marxism-Leninism, has already made East and West German degrees and diplomas almost impossible to compare (though in some fields a common scholarly tradition remains alive). The only structure which has resisted many attempts at political domination, and has still not been completely subdued, is the Lutheran church.

IT IS PERHAPS necessary to emphasise that these trends are not superficial changes that can be reversed in a year or two. The man who has become a People's Judge by virtue of a diploma acquired from the new Academy of Administration; the Manager of the large State enterprise; the General of the People's Army; the Dean of the Workers' and Peasants' Faculty; these are not simply imposed office-holders, but new social dignitaries whose very existence is bound up with the new society. It is probably safe to assume that one-tenth of the population of East Germany is personally tied to the régime in this way. And it is clear that a homogeneous upper class of this kind, interchangeable in its membership, perpetually refreshed but not modified by planned social mobility, is a powerful basis for totalitarian political institutions and contributes to their stability.

There is much else to support the thesis that East German totalitarianism has acquired a social basis. All analysts of National Socialism have noted the connection between totalitarian institutions and efforts to cater for, and eventually win over, the youth of a country. Those who have reason to be worried about their legitimacy need to concern themselves, above all, with youth. For youth is not only "the future," it is (as we know from student risings in many countries, and specifically from the Hungarian revolution of 1956) also a potential threat. There are many indications of this concern of East Germany's leaders with youth—a concern which often takes the form of giving young people highly responsible positions in order to tie them to the existing order. Despite the high number of young people among the refugees from East Germany, not all of these measures are likely to have been unsuccessful.

Regarding this stabilisation of totalitarian

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political institutions, I should mention a further point. The ideology of Marxism-Leninism in itself is hardly more than a toy for certain party theoreticians. There is, however, a notion, widespread not only in East Germany but also among refugees in the West, according to which "the whole" is more important than its parts, and the welfare of "society" and "the state" takes precedence over the welfare of the individual. People who have turned their backs on the DDR in disgust and despair often remark after a few weeks in the West, "there is one point in favour of the East —there 'the whole' still means something! In the West everybody just follows his own wishes...." Precisely because such remarks—unintentionally, to be sure—cast doubt on the very basis of Western freedom, they show the remarkable impact of certain value-patterns in the Communist East: value-patterns which are more in keeping with totalitarian institutions than many of their adherents realise. For the totalitarian state rests much of its authority on this permanent emphasis on the precedence of "the whole"—which in effect means the new ruling class—over the individual.

IT IS USELESS to indulge in speculation about how long the present régime in East Germany can survive. For years there have been indications of internal instability. The new ruling class may be homogeneous; but it is also very mediocre. Occasional waves of terror may succeed in maintaining totalitarian institutions; but they do not enhance the legitimacy of the régime. In any case, belief in the precedence of "the whole" loses much of its strength if Big Brother controls every aspect of life too noticeably. And yet, more has happened East of the Elbe since 1945 than the imposition of a rule of terror based on Soviet bayonets. To-day, East German political institutions have a social substructure which contributes to their maintenance. Any liberalisation of East Germany would require not only the abolition of the régime, but also a fresh social revolution. The fact that there have been profound changes in East German society provides its rulers with their only reasonably reliable guarantee of stability. But it also presents Germans with an intractable problem where reunification is concerned.

A MAN FROM MARS, standing for half an hour in the city centres of Leipzig and Frankfurt-on-Main, would hardly guess that both cities were part of the same country less than twenty years before. In fact, of course, the most striking difference between the two cities —the grey austerity of Leipzig, and the conspicuous wealth of Frankfurt—is a significant pointer to West German development since the war. The most frequently repeated cliché about West Germany—the "economic miracle"—is indeed, properly understood, her most surprising and most characteristic feature.

In the first place, the mere extent of West Germany's economic development since the war is astonishing. Germany's economy (much like that of Britain and the United States) struggled desperately throughout the inter-war period to return to the level of 1913. That level has been left behind. Indices of production are not always satisfactory measures of industrial development, but in this case the total index does hint at the truth.

If we take the total industrial production of Germany in 1913 as 100, production had sunk to 38 by 1919. The temporary recovery up to 1929 (103) was soon undone during the Depression (1932: 60). It was not until 1939 that the level of 1913 was reached and surpassed (126). In so far as it is possible to produce an index for 1945–46, 40 per cent of 1913 seems too high rather than too low an estimate. West German industrial production to-day, on the other hand, with an index of considerably above 300 (1963), and still growing in volume, bears witness to an unprecedented economic explosion for the post-war years.

Germany has shared with other Western countries, of course, this transition to mass production and affluence. More important, in our context, is a second feature, an aspect of the economic miracle which is peculiar to Germany and which, in terms of German history, probably constitutes the real German miracle. I have referred to the peculiarities of industrialisation in Germany. Though largely based on private capital, industrialisation in Germany was "national-liberal," that is, national-conservative in character. But in 1945—or, more precisely, in 1948—after the cruel destruction of the old Prusso-German ruling group, Germany had the unique opportunity of repeating the process of industrialisation from its beginnings. And then something totally unexpected happened. This second industrialisation took place in a strictly liberal-capitalist spirit, so that (if

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this does not sound paradoxical) the economy and society of post-war Germany provide the first example of true capitalist organisation in all German history.

It is hard to recall, after 15 years, just how surprising this development was. Even now, one is tempted to say that the liberal experiment of 1948–9 went against all economic rationality. On the eve of the currency reform, laymen and experts were convinced that gradual, limited liberalisation was the only path away from rationing, economic controls, and planning to a more prosperous society. Yet they were quite wrong. Joseph Schumpeter had predicted for the economy—and Karl Mannheim for the whole of society—the inevitability of increasing state intervention. No wonder people in all political parties were convinced, in 1949, of the necessity of far-reaching economic planning. To-day, we are faced with the remarkable fact that public property, in the second half of the 20th century, is being turned back to private hands. There is no doubt that entrepreneurial success in post-war Germany was, to some extent, a result of the abstinence of the state, especially in tax matters—and is therefore not entirely due to the spontaneous initiative of the new middle class. Still, the fact remains that vigorous private initiative—or, what is merely another way of saying the same thing: an unbounded individual desire for gain—was the motive force of the economic recovery of Western Germany. Of course, there can no longer be, in our time, a "pure" capitalism, such as existed in the early period of English and American industrialisation. But, as far as Germany is concerned, she has never before come as close to capitalist patterns of social organisation as in the years since 1948.

MANY FEATURES of contemporary German society show the effects of this economic miracle. Like East Germany, West Germany had to develop a new class of leaders after the disappearance of the old upper class. It would be an exaggeration to say that this task had already been completed. Obviously, an unplanned social development proceeds somewhat more slowly than one which is conceived and controlled in detail. Here, one must agree with the recent comment of the Bonn correspondent of *The Times* that there are no real signs of the emergence of "Society" with a capital S in Bonn. But many holders of leading political and economic positions in the Federal Republic, and to a lesser extent in other spheres of society, *do* differ considerably from their predecessors. The most pronounced change is the much greater influence of economic leadership groups. The proportion of cabinet ministers and members of parliament who, by family or occupation, have connections with industry has risen very considerably. In the economic sphere itself, the urge to exert political pressure has grown stronger, now that even medium-scale entrepreneurs no longer have anybody "above them" to tell them what to do or not to do. Indeed, perhaps the very absence of "Society" is a sign of this change. A tendency towards *nouveau riche* behaviour—a liking for medieval choir-stools in the dining room, for conspicuous consumption, a horrific lack of taste in matters of art and literature—is one of the unmistakable characteristics of this new society in West Germany.

THESE DEVELOPMENTS chiefly concern the top of the social structure. But a corresponding change in values can be observed throughout West German society. As against the heroic past, with its emphasis on *Gemeinschaft* and hard work, the whole of German society is to-day (to quote a phrase of Schumpeter's about capitalism) "bathed in an economic light." So striking is this new illumination that the foreign visitor, in search of the much-praised and much-abused "German national character" of the past, finds hardly a trace of it. The Germans of to-day are neither particularly industrious nor particularly enamoured of the military—neither particularly subservient nor particularly romantic. Probably the most crucial change in the social values of West Germans is the setting up of individual success and private pleasure as the twin guide-lines of behaviour. What scornful critics denounce as "materialism" and "exaggerated individualism" is in fact a necessary correlate of any quasi-capitalist social order—the desire to increase individual happiness, coupled with a readiness to protest against any external intervention in one's own pattern of life (especially if it comes from the state).

The significance of these new developments is that they have reversed the historic trend of German society towards a monolithic type of social organisation. When a sample of people in the Federal Republic was asked recently

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which social groups they thought were "too powerful," opinion was almost equally divided between Industry, the Church, and the Military. This seems to indicate that there are several groups competing for influence, and that no single group is capable of assigning all others their place within the whole. The concept of "pluralism" has lost almost all its meaning by frequent and indiscriminate use. But if one means by it the existence of competing groups of more or less equal rank, West German society can be accurately described as "pluralistic." Pluralism is, of course, always precarious. At any given time, one or other competitor in a pluralistic system tends to have a slight advantage over the others. But what matters, and what is new in West Germany's development, is that no one social group holds the reins of power permanently in its hands. Society, therefore, remains sufficiently flexible to give everybody a chance to see his claims represented.

IT IS HERE that the political significance of the changes in the West German social structure becomes apparent. Now that quasi-capitalist patterns of social organisation have emerged, there is, for the first time in Germany history, hope that German society will provide a stable foundation for representative government. Representative institutions remain a dead letter if rigidities of the social structure effectively prevent any chance of a non-violent change. This was one of the main problems of the Weimar Republic. But the social changes since the war have undone many of these rigidities. An entrepreneurial ruling class is more likely to fight off state tutelage than a ruling class of civil servants, army officers, and landlords. The man who has grown accustomed to determining his own course of action, and who makes personal happiness the criterion of his actions, is not so easily persuaded to accept authoritarian or totalitarian rule. Where there is a plurality of groups competing for domination, each one has an interest in the maintenance of conditions of free and fair conflict. In this sense, the conclusion seems justified that the structural changes in West German society since the war hold out a better chance for representative government than ever before in German history.

IT WOULD BE pleasant to conclude this analysis of some changes in the German social structure on an optimistic note. But this favourable prognosis for German democracy should be qualified by adding that it is intended in relative terms—that is, by comparison with earlier phases of German history. And since not even the most ardent admirer of Germany could describe our country as a natural breeding-ground of democracy, this conclusion may not amount to very much. Indeed, a number of reservations and threats to the development I have depicted are too clearly in evidence.

In the first place, the very combination of the quantitative and the qualitative economic miracle—the affluent society and liberal elements in the new Germany—raises serious questions. Are not these changes a mere consequence of economic prosperity? Are not the changes in West German society as superficial as those in East Germany? Might not a new economic crisis have consequences like those of the Depression of 1929? Although objections of this order are widespread (both inside and outside Germany), their basis in fact is by no means as certain as is often believed. Thus, the causal connection between the economic crisis and Hitler's rise to power is at best tenuous—especially in view of the fact that those most directly hit by the crisis, the unemployed, did *not* turn to the Nazis in significant numbers. Still, this cannot invalidate the objection that the real test for the stability of representative institutions in West Germany is yet to come, and that less favourable economic developments would be one of the conditions of this test.

Again, it is impossible to be dogmatic as to whether those elements in the German social structure, which in the past were such effective obstacles to democracy, have really been destroyed as effectively as my interpretation suggests. There are clearly many remnants of the past in German society: "compromised" individuals in prominent positions in politics, the army, the legal system and elsewhere. There are also extremist quasi-political groupings, especially in the wake of the refugee organisations—though these have mostly shrunk to mere cadres of functionaries. Perhaps more important, there are unchanged patterns in important fields such as education. No doubt, all these traces of Germany's authoritarian past are merely leftovers, and therefore less important than those who see West Germany only in their light so often assume. But one cannot deny that resistance to representative democratic govern-

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ment is present in many a dark corner of German society.

Conscious anti-democratic tendencies apart, the most profound resistance to the changes I have described is found in an attitude of mind the connection of which with political democracy may not be immediately evident. As against what Talmon has called "totalitarian democracy," representative government involves recognition of the necessary interplay of incompatible interests and ideas. Conflict, the antagonism of government and opposition—but also of interest groupings in all spheres of society—is the lifeblood of democracy. Those who reject conflict as such, therefore, go some way towards rejecting representative institutions. Yet this attitude is very common in Germany. In lieu of political parties fighting one another for power, people would prefer the seeming harmony of an all-party coalition. There is (at least among non-participants) a widespread desire to settle industrial strife by state intervention or by some utopian once-and-for-all solution. Similar reactions are to be found within the educational and legal communities, and within many private organisations. But nowhere is this *penchant* for settling problems "for good" by one decisive—and, in effect, authoritarian—decision so evident as in people's attitudes to social conflict.

I have said that pluralism—the full competition of large groupings and institutions—often rests on a precarious equilibrium. That is why it is difficult to allay fears that one of the competing institutions—industry, the church, the military—might become so powerful that it would use its predominance to destroy the competitive system itself. On the other hand, an attempt to analyse these fears more precisely ("the Federal Republic is a clerical state," "Big Business decides everything") tends to reveal that they are debating points rather than sober descriptions of social reality.

There is, however, one threat to the development of more liberal patterns in German society which might lead to the abolition of social pluralism and which ought not to be underestimated. This arises from the fact that social changes in East as well as West Germany have taken place in the context of a world conflict between East and West. It appears to be a general law that human groups react to external pressure by increased internal coherence. In the East-West conflict, each society finds itself in such a position of pressure from without. For totalitarian countries, this does not constitute any particular threat, since they are in any case based on a structure of total mobilisation. But external pressure may lead the liberal societies of the West to restrict internal liberties in the name of resistance to totalitarian pressure. There are some indications that both the United States and West Germany will be exposed to this danger if they refuse to recognise new political developments which are in fact reducing the pressure from without. Here is a new threat to liberal political and social structures, and one difficult to counter. The paradoxical possibility that democracy can be destroyed while it is being protected deserves the attention of all who are concerned for the survival of representative institutions.

There can be no doubt, of course, that the Federal Republic is superior to the German Democratic Republic in terms of the legitimacy of its political order. In West Germany, it is true, there could be a more active acceptance of the new political institutions—but then legitimacy is perhaps always a passive phenomenon of the absence of revolt. Nevertheless, it would be irresponsible of me to describe the changes in West German society as final, and representative institutions as secure. The two halves of Germany reacted in very different ways to the *tabula rasa* of 1945. With some exaggeration, one might say that the one half has chosen the totalitarian, the other the representative face of the Janus-head of modern politics as its model. This ambiguous fact points to the chance of a reunification in the foreseeable future. It points equally to the possibility—is it hope or danger?—of an internal, perhaps violent, breakdown of the régime in the East, as well as the threat of a renewed defeat of representative democracy in the West.

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The Importance of Nietzsche

On the Modern German Mind — By ERICH HELLER

IN 1873, two years after Bismarck's Prussia had defeated France, a young German who happened to live in Switzerland, teaching classical philology in the University of Basle, wrote a treatise concerned with "the German mind." It was an inspired diatribe against, above all, the German notion of *Kultur* and against the philistine readiness to believe that military victory proved cultural superiority. Then and there, he protested, the opposite was the case: the civilisation of the vanquished French was bound to dominate the victorious German people that had wasted its spirit upon the chimera of political power.

This national heretic's name, rather obscure at the time, was Friedrich Nietzsche. What, almost a century ago, he wrote about the perverse relationship between military success and intellectual dominance proved true: not then, perhaps, but now. Defeated in two wars, Germany appears to have invaded vast territories of the world's mind, with Nietzsche himself as no mean conqueror. For his was the vision of things to come. Among all the thinkers of the 19th century he is, with the possible exception of Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard, the only one who would not be too amazed by the amazing scene upon which we now move in sad, pathetic, heroic, stoic, or ludicrous bewilderment. Much, too much, would strike him as *déjà vu*; he had foreseen it, and he would understand: for the modern mind speaks German, not always good German, but fluent German nonetheless. It was, alas, forced to learn the idiom of Karl Marx, and was delighted to be introduced to itself in the language of Sigmund Freud; taught by Ranke and, later, Max Weber, it acquired its historical and sociological self-consciousness, moved out of its tidy Newtonian universe on the instruction of Einstein, and followed a design of Oswald Spengler's in sending from the depth of its spiritual depression most ingeniously engineered objects higher than the moon. Whether it discovers, with Heidegger, the true habitation of its *Existenz* on the frontiers of Nothing, or meditates, with Sartre and Camus, *le Néant* or the Absurd; whether—to pass to its less serious moods—it is nihilistically young and profitably angry in London or rebelliously debauched and buddhistic in San Francisco—*man spricht deutsch*. It is all part of a story told by Nietzsche.

As far as modern German literature and thought are concerned, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they would not be what they are if Nietzsche had never lived. Name almost any poet, man of letters, philosopher, who wrote in German during the 20th century and attained to stature and influence; name Rilke, George, Kafka, Thomas Mann, Ernst Jünger, Musil, Benn, Heidegger, or Jaspers—and you name at the same time Friedrich Nietzsche. He is to them all—whether or not they know and acknowledge it (and most of them do)—what St. Thomas Aquinas was to Dante: the categorical interpreter of a world which they contemplate poetically or philosophically without ever radically upsetting its Nietzschean structure.

NIETZSCHE died in 1900, after twelve years of a total eclipse of his intellect, insane—and on the threshold of this century. Thinking and writing to the very edge of insanity, and with some of his last pages even going over it, he read and interpreted the temperatures of his own mind; but by doing so, he has drawn the fever-chart of an epoch. Indeed, much of his work reads like the self-diagnosis of a desperate physician who, suffering the disease on our behalf, comes to prescribe as a cure that we should form a new idea of health, and live by it.

He was convinced that it would take at least fifty years before a few men would understand what he had accomplished; and he feared that even then his teaching would be misinterpreted and misapplied. "I am terrified," he wrote, "by

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the thought of the sort of people who may one day invoke my authority." But is this not, he added, the anguish of every great teacher? He knows that he may prove a disaster as much as a blessing. The conviction that he was a great teacher never left him after he had passed through that period of sustained inspiration in which he wrote the first part of *Zarathustra*. After this, all his utterances convey the disquieting self-confidence and the terror of a man who has reached the culmination of that paradox which he embodies, a paradox which we shall try to name and which ever since has cast its dangerous spell over some of the finest and some of the coarsest minds.

Are we then, at the remove of two generations, in a better position to probe Nietzsche's mind and to avoid, as he hoped some might, the misunderstanding that he was merely concerned with the religious, philosophical, or political controversies fashionable in his day? And if this be a misinterpretation, can we put anything more valid in its place? What is the knowledge which he claims to have, raising him in his own opinion far above the contemporary level of thought? What the discovery which serves him as a lever to unhinge the whole fabric of traditional values?

It is the knowledge that God is dead.

THE DEATH OF GOD he calls the greatest event in modern history and the cause of extreme danger. Note well the paradox contained in these words. He never said that there was no God, but that the Eternal had been vanquished by Time and the Immortal suffered death at the hands of mortals: God is dead. It is like a cry mingled of despair and triumph, reducing, by comparison, the whole story of atheism and agnosticism before and after him to the level of respectable mediocrity and making it sound like a collection of announcements of bankers who regret they are unable to invest in an unsafe proposition. Nietzsche, for the 19th century, brings to its *perverse* conclusion a line of religious thought and experience linked with the names of St. Paul, St. Augustine, Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Dostoevsky, minds for whom God was not simply the creator of an order of nature within which man has his clearly defined place; but to whom He came rather in order to challenge their natural being, making demands which appeared absurd in the light of natural reason. These men are of the family of Jacob: having wrestled with God for His blessing, they ever after limp through life with the framework of Nature incurably out of joint. Nietzsche is just such a wrestler; except that in him the shadow of Jacob merges with the shadow of Prometheus. Like Jacob, Nietzsche too believed that he prevailed against God in that struggle, and won a new name for himself, the name of Zarathustra. But the words *he* spoke on his mountain to the angel of the Lord were: "I will not let thee go, except thou curse me." Or, in words which Nietzsche did in fact speak: "I have on purpose devoted my life to exploring the whole contrast to a truly religious nature. I know the Devil and all his visions of God."

"God is dead"—this is the very core of Nietzsche's spiritual existence, and what follows is despair, *and* hope in a new greatness of man, visions of catastrophe *and* glory, the icy brilliance of analytical reason, fathoming with affected irreverence those depths hitherto hidden by awe and fear, and, side-by-side with it, the ecstatic invocations of a ritual healer. Probably inspired by Hölderlin's dramatic poem *Empedocles*, the young Nietzsche, who loved what he knew of Hölderlin's poetry, at the age of twenty planned to write a drama with Empedocles as its hero. His notes show that he saw the Greek philosopher as the tragic personification of his age, as a man in whom the latent conflicts of his epoch attained to consciousness, as one who suffered and died as the victim of an unresolvable tension: born with the soul of a *homo religiosus*, a seer, a prophet, and poet, he yet had the mind of a radical sceptic; and defending his soul against his mind and, in turn, his mind against his soul, he made his soul lose its spontaneity, and finally his mind its rationality. Had Nietzsche ever written the drama *Empedocles*, it might have become, in uncanny anticipation, his *own* tragedy.

It is a passage from Nietzsche's *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, his *Cheerful Science*, which conveys best the substance and quality of the mind, indeed the whole spiritual situation, from which the pronouncement of the death of God sprang. The passage is prophetically entitled "The Madman," and might have been called "The New Diogenes":

> Have you not heard of that madman who, in the broad light of the forenoon, lit a lantern and ran into the market-place, crying incessantly: "I am looking for God!" . . . As it happened, many were standing there who did not believe in God, and so he aroused great laughter. . . . The madman leapt right among them. . . . "Where is God?" he cried. "Well, I will tell you. *We have murdered him*—you and I. . . . But how did we do this deed? . . . Who gave us the sponge with which to wipe out the whole horizon? How did we set about unchaining our earth from her sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? . . . Are we not falling incessantly? . . . Is night not approaching, and more and more night? Must we not light lanterns in the forenoon? Behold the noise of the grave-diggers, busy to bury God. . . . And we

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> have killed him! What possible comfort is there for us? . . . Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? To appear worthy of it, must not we ourselves become gods?"—At this point the madman fell silent and looked once more at those around him: "Oh," he said, "I am too early. My time has not yet come. The news of this tremendous event is still on its way. . . . Lightning and thunder take time, the light of the stars takes time to get to us, deeds take time to be seen and heard . . . and this deed is still farther from them than the farthest stars—*and yet it was they themselves who did it!*"

And elsewhere, in a more prosaic mood, Nietzsche says: "People have no notion yet that from now onwards they exist on the mere pittance of inherited and decaying values"—soon to be overtaken by an enormous bankruptcy.

THE STORY of the Madman, written two years before *Zarathustra* and containing *in nuce* the whole message of the Superman, shows the distance that divides Nietzsche from the conventional attitudes of atheism. He is the madman, breaking with his sinister news into the market-place complacency of the pharisees of unbelief. They have done away with God, and yet the report of their own deed has not yet reached them. They know not what they have done, but He who could forgive them is no more. Much of Nietzsche's work ever after is the prophecy of their fate: "The waters of religion," Nietzsche writes at the time of *Zarathustra*, "recede and leave behind morasses and shallow pools. . . . Where we live, soon nobody will be able to exist." For men become enemies, and each his own enemy. From now onwards they will *hate*, Nietzsche believes, however many *comforts* they will lavish upon themselves, and hate *themselves* with a new hatred, unconsciously at work in the depths of their souls. True, there will be ever better reformers of society, ever better socialists, and ever better hospitals, and an ever increasing intolerance of pain and poverty and suffering and death, and an ever more fanatical craving for the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Yet the deepest impulse informing their striving will not be love and will not be compassion. Its true source will be the panic-struck determination not to have to ask the question "What is the meaning of our lives?", the question which will remind them of the death of God, the uncomfortable question inscribed on the features of those who are uncomfortable, and asked above all by pain and poverty and suffering and death. Rather than have that question asked, they will do everything to smooth it away from the face of humanity. For they cannot endure it. And yet they will despise themselves for not enduring it, and for their guilt-ridden inability to answer it: and their self-hatred will betray them behind the back of their apparent charity and humanitarian concern. For *there* they will assiduously construct the tools for the annihilation of human kind. "There will be wars," Nietzsche writes, "such as have never been waged on earth." And he says: "I foresee something terrible. Chaos everywhere. Nothing left which is of any value; nothing which commands: Thou shalt!" This would have been the inspiration of the final work Nietzsche often said he would write and never wrote: *The Will to Power*, or, as he sometimes wanted to call it, *The Transvaluation of All Values*. It might have given his full diagnosis of what he termed nihilism, the state of human beings and societies faced with a total eclipse of all values, and finally with a breakdown of all established categories of thought: for these too have, as Nietzsche knew, their foundation in the faith in a transcendent nationality. With this faith gone, not only will everything be *permissible*, but also everything *thinkable*—even the absurd thought that we live in a metaphysically absurd world.

IT IS IN DEFINING and examining the (for him *historical*) phenomenon of nihilism that Nietzsche's attack on Christianity sets in (and it has remained the only truly subtle point which, within the whole range of his more and more unrestrained argumentativeness, this Anti-Christ makes against Christianity). For it is at this point that Nietzsche asks, and asks the same question in countless variations throughout his works: What are the *specific* qualities which the Christian tradition has instilled and cultivated in the minds of men?

They are, he thinks, twofold: on the one hand, a more refined sense of truth than any other civilisation has known, an almost uncontrollable desire for absolute spiritual and intellectual certainties; and, on the other hand, the ever-present suspicion that life on this earth is not in itself a supreme value, but in need of a higher, a transcendental justification. This, Nietzsche believes, is a destructive, and even self-destructive alliance, which is bound finally to corrode the very Christian beliefs on which it rests. For the mind, exercised and guided in its search for knowledge by the most sophisticated and comprehensive theology the world has ever known—a theology which through St. Thomas Aquinas has assimilated into its grand system the genius of Aristotle—was at the same time fashioned and directed by the indelible Christian distrust of the ways of the world. Thus it had to follow, with the utmost logical precision and determination, a course of systematically "devaluing" the knowably real. This mind,

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Nietzsche predicts, will eventually, in a frenzy of intellectual honesty, unmask as humbug and "meaningless" that which it began by regarding as the finer things in life. The boundless faith in truth, the joint legacy of Christ and Greece, will in the end dislodge every possible belief in the truth of any faith. Souls, long disciplined in a school of unworldliness and humility, will insist upon knowing the worst about themselves, indeed will only be able to grasp what is humiliating. Psychology will denigrate the creations of beauty, laying bare the tangle of unworthy desires of which they are "mere" sublimations. History will undermine the accumulated reputation of the human race by exhuming from beneath the splendid monuments the dead body of the past, revealing everywhere the spuriousness of motives, the human, all-too-human; and science itself will rejoice in exposing this long-suspected world as a mechanical contraption of calculable pulls and pushes, as a self-sufficient agglomeration of senseless energy, until finally, in a surfeit of knowledge, the scientific mind will perform the somersault of self-annihilation.

"THE NIHILISTIC consequences of our natural sciences"—this is one of Nietzsche's fragmentary jottings—"from its pursuits there follows ultimately a self-decomposition, a turning against itself," which, he was convinced, would first show as the impossibility, within science itself, of comprehending the very object of its enquiry within *one* logically coherent system, and would lead to extreme scientific pessimism, to an inclination to embrace a kind of analytical, abstract mysticism in which man would shift himself and his world where, Nietzsche thinks, they were driving "ever since Copernicus: from the centre towards an unknown X."

It is the tremendous paradox of Nietzsche that he himself follows, and indeed consciously wishes to hasten, this course of "devaluation"—particularly as a psychologist: and at the onset of megalomania he called himself "the first psychologist of Europe," a self-compliment which Sigmund Freud all but endorsed when, surprisingly late in his life, he came to know Nietzsche's writings. He had good reason to do so. Consider, for instance, the following passage from Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*:

> The world of historical values is dominated by forgery. These great poets, like Byron, Musset, Poe, Leopardi, Kleist, Gogol (I dare not mention greater names, but I mean them)—all endowed with souls wishing to conceal a break; often avenging themselves with their works upon some inner desecration, often seeking oblivion in their lofty flights from their all-too-faithful memories, often lost in mud and alm in love with it until they become like will-o'-t wisps of the morasses and simulate the stars. . Oh what a torture are all these great artis and altogether these higher beings, what a tor ture to him who has guessed their true nature.

This does indeed anticipate many a more recent speculation on traumata and compensations, on lusts and sublimations, on wounds and bows. Yet the extraordinary Nietzsche—incomprehensible in his contradictions except as the common strategist of two opposing armies who plans for the victory of a mysterious third—a few pages later takes back the guessing, not without insulting himself in the process: "From which follows that it is the sign of a fine humanity to respect 'the mask' and not, in the wrong places, indulge in psychology and psychological curiosity." And furthermore: "He who does not *wish* to see what is great in a man, has the sharpest eye for that which is low and superficial in him, and so gives away—himself."

IF NIETZSCHE IS NOT the first psychologist of Europe, he is certainly a great psychologist—and perhaps really the first who comprehended what his more methodical successors, "strictly scientific" in their approach, did not see: *the psychology and the ethics of knowledge itself*; and both the psychology and the ethics of knowledge are of particular relevance when the knowledge in question purports to be knowledge of the human psyche. It was, strangely enough, Nietzsche's a-moral metaphysics, his doubtful but immensely fruitful intuition of the *Will to Power* being the ultimate reality of the world, that made him into the first moralist of *knowledge* in his century and long after. While all his scientific and scholarly contemporaries throve on the comfortable assumptions that, firstly, there was such a thing as "objective," and therefore morally neutral, knowledge, and that, secondly, everything that *can* be known "objectively" is therefore also *worth knowing*, he realised that knowledge, or at least the mode of knowledge predominant at his time and ours, is the subtlest guise of the Will to Power; and that *as a manifestation of the will it is liable to be judged morally*.

For him, there can be no knowledge without a compelling urge to acquire it; and he knew that the knowledge thus acquired invariably reflects the nature of the impulse by which the mind was prompted. It is this impulse which *creatively* partakes in the making of the knowledge, and its share in it is truly immeasurable when the knowledge is about the very source of the impulse: the soul. This is why all interpretations of the soul must to a high degree be self-interpretations: the sick interpret the sick,

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and the dreamers interpret dreams. Or, as the Viennese satirist Karl Kraus—with that calculated injustice which is the prerogative of satire—once said of a certain psychological theory: "Psychoanalysis is the disease of which it pretends to be the cure."

PSYCHOLOGY is bad psychology if it disregards its own psychology. Nietzsche knew this. He was, as we have seen from his passage about "those great men," a most suspicious psychologist, but he was at the same time suspicious of the impulse of suspicion which was the father of his thought.

Homer, to be sure, did not suspect his heroes, but Stendhal did. Does this mean that Homer knew less about the heroic than Stendhal? Does it make sense to say Flaubert's Emma Bovary is the product of an imagination more profoundly initiated into the psychology of women than that which created Dante's Beatrice? Was Benjamin Constant, who created the dubious lover Adolphe, on more intimate terms with the nature of a young man's erotic passion than was Shakespeare, the begetter of Romeo? Certainly, Homer's Achilles and Stendhal's Julien Sorel are different heroes, Dante's Beatrice and Flaubert's Emma Bovary are different women, Shakespeare's Romeo and Constant's Adolphe are different lovers, but it would be naïve to believe that they simply differ "in actual fact." Actual facts hardly exist in either art or psychology: both interpret and both claim universality for the meticulously particular. Those creatures made by creative imaginations can indeed not be compared; yet if they differ as, in life, one unique person differs from another, at the same time, because they have their existence not "in life" but in art, they are incommensurable above all by virtue of their makers' incommensurable *wills* to know the human person, to know the hero, the woman, the lover. It is not better and more knowing minds that have created the suspect hero, the unlovable woman, the disingenuous lover, but minds possessed by different affections for a different knowledge, affections other than the wonder and pride which know Achilles, the love which knows Beatrice, the passion and compassion which know Romeo. When Hamlet comes to know the frailty of woman, he knows Ophelia not better than when he was "unknowingly" in love with her; he knows her differently and he knows her worse.

All *new* knowledge about the soul is knowledge about a *different* soul. For can it ever happen that the freely discovering mind says to the soul: "This is what you are!"? Is it not rather as if the mind said to the soul: "This is how I *wish* you to see! This is the image after which I create you! This is my secret about you: I shock you with it and, shockingly, at once wrest it from you." And worse: having received and revealed its secret, the soul is no longer what it was when it lived in secrecy. For there *are* secrets which are created in the process of their revelation. And worse still: having been told its secrets, it may cease to be a soul. The step from modern psychology to soullessness is as imperceptible as that from modern physics to the dissolution of matter.

IT IS THIS DISTURBING state of affairs which made Nietzsche deplore "the torture" of psychologically guessing "the true nature of those higher beings" and, at the same time, recommend "respect for the mask" as a condition of "finer humanity." (A great pity that those parts of Nietzsche's *Transvaluation of All Values* which, if we are to trust his notes, would have been concerned with the literature of the 19th century never came to be written. For no literary critic of the age had a more penetrating insight into the "nihilistic" character of that "absolute æstheticism" that, from Baudelaire onwards, has been the dominant inspiration of European poetry, an æstheticism the *negative* side of which Nietzsche saw in the utterly pessimistic picture of reality provided by the realistic and psychological novel of that epoch; and how intimately he knew those æsthetic Furies, or furious Muses, that possessed the mind of Flaubert, inspiring him to produce an *œuvre* in which absolute pessimism, radical psychology, and extreme æstheticism are so intriguingly fused.)

For Nietzsche, however, *all* the activities of human consciousness share the predicament of psychology. There can be, for him, no "pure" knowledge, only satisfactions, however sophisticated, of the ever-varying intellectual needs of the *will* to know. He therefore demands that man should accept *moral responsibility* for the kind of questions he asks, and that he should realise what *values* are implied in the answers he seeks—and in this he was more Christian than all our post-Faustian Fausts of truth and scholarship. "The desire for truth," he says, "is itself in need of critique. Let this be the definition of my philosophical task. By way of experiment, I shall question for once the value of truth." And does he not! And he protests that, in an age which is as uncertain of its values as is his and ours, the search for truth will issue in either trivialities or—catastrophe.

We may well wonder how he would react to the pious hopes of our day that the intelligence and moral conscience of politicians will save the world from the disastrous products of our scientific explorations and engineering skills. It

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is perhaps not too difficult to guess; for he knew that there was a fatal link between the moral resolution of scientists to follow the scientific search *wherever*, by its own momentum, it will take us, and the moral debility of societies not altogether disinclined to "apply" the results, however catastrophic. Believing that there was a hidden identity between *all* the expressions of the Will to Power, he saw the element of moral nihilism in the ethics of our science: its determination not to have "higher values" interfere with its highest value—Truth (as it conceives it). Thus he said of the kind of knowledge which the age pursues with furious passion that it was "the most handsome instrument of perdition."

"God is dead"—and man, in his heart of hearts, is incapable of forgiving himself for having done away with Him: he is bent upon punishing himself for this, his "greatest deed." For the time being, however, he will take refuge in many an evasive action. With the instinct of a born hunter Nietzsche pursues him into all his hiding-places, cornering him in each of them. Morality without religion? Indeed not: "All purely moral demands without their religious basis," he says, "must needs end in nihilism." What is there left? Intoxication. "Intoxication with music, with cruelty, with hero-worship, or with hatred. . . . Some sort of mysticism. . . . Art for Art's sake, Truth for Truth's sake, as a narcotic against self-disgust; some kind of routine, *any* silly little fanaticism. . . ." But none of these drugs can have any lasting effect. The time, Nietzsche predicts, is fast approaching when secular crusaders, tools of man's collective suicide, will devastate the world with their rival claims to compensate for the lost Kingdom of Heaven by setting up on earth the ideological rules of Love and Justice which, by the very force of the spiritual derangement involved, will issue into the rules of cruelty and slavery; and he prophesies that the war for global domination will be fought on behalf of ideological doctrines.

In one of his notes written at the time of *Zarathustra* Nietzsche says: "He who no longer finds what is great in God, will find it nowhere; he must either deny or create it." These words take us to the heart of that paradox that enwraps Nietzsche's whole existence. He is, by the very texture of his soul and mind, one of the most radically religious natures that the 19th century brought forth, but endowed with an intellect which guards, with the aggressive jealousy of a watch-dog, all the approaches to the temple. For such a man, what, after the *denial* of God, is there left to *create*? Souls, not only strong enough to endure Hell, but to transmute its agonies into superhuman delight—in fact: the Superman. Nothing short of the transvaluation of all values can save us. Man has to be made immune from the effects of his second Fall and final separation from God: he must learn to see in his second expulsion the promise of a new paradise. For "the Devil may become envious of him who suffers so deeply, and throw him out—into Heaven."

Is THERE, THEN, any cure? Yes, says Nietzsche: a new kind of psychic health. And what is Nietzsche's conception of it? How is it to be brought about? By perfect self-knowledge *and* perfect self-transcendence. But to explain this, we should have to adopt an idiom disturbingly compounded of the language of Freudian psychology and tragic heroism. For the self-knowledge which Nietzsche expects all but requires a course in depth-analysis; but the self-transcendence he means lies not in the practice of virtue as a sublimation of natural meanness; it can only be found in a kind of unconditional and almost supranatural sublimity. If there were a Christian virtue, be it goodness, innocence, chastity, saintliness, or self-sacrifice, that could not, however much he tried, be interpreted as a compensatory manœuvre of the mind to "transvalue" weakness and frustration, Nietzsche might affirm it (as he is constantly tempted to praise Pascal). The trouble is that there cannot be such a virtue. For virtues are reflected upon by minds; and even the purest virtue will be suspect to a mind filled with suspicion. To think thoughts so immaculate that they must command the trust of even the most untrusting imagination, and to act from motives so pure that they are out of reach of even the most cunning psychology, this is the unattainable ideal, it would seem, of this first psychologist of Europe. "Cæsar—with the heart of Christ!" he once exclaimed in the secrecy of his diary. Was this perhaps a definition of the Superman, this darling child of his imagination? It may well be; but this lofty idea meant, alas, that he had to think the meanest thought: he saw in the real Christ an illegitimate son of the Will to Power, a frustrated rabbi who set out to save himself and the underdog humanity from the intolerable strain of impotently resenting the Cæsars: *not* to be Cæsar was now proclaimed a spiritual distinction—a newly invented form of power, the power of the powerless.

NIETZSCHE had to fail, and fail tragically, in his determination to create a new man from the clay of negation. Almost with the same breath with which he gave the life of his imagination to the Superman, he blew the flame

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out again. For Zarathustra who preaches the Superman also teaches the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence of All Things; and according to this doctrine nothing can ever come into being that had not existed at some time before. Thus the expectation of the Superman, this majestic new departure of life, indeed the possibility of any novel development, seems frustrated from the outset, and the world, caught forever in a cycle of gloomily repeated constellations of energy, stands condemned to a most dismal eternity.

Yet the metaphysical nonsense of these contradictory doctrines is not entirely lacking in poetic and didactic method. The Eternal Recurrence of All Things is Nietzsche's mythic formula of a meaningless world, the universe of nihilism, and the Superman stands for its transcendence, for the miraculous resurrection of meaning from its total negation. All Nietzsche's miracles are paradoxes designed to jerk man out of his false beliefs—in time, before they bring about his spiritual destruction in an ecstasy of disillusionment and frustration. The Eternal Recurrence is the high school to teach strength through despair. The Superman graduates from it *summa cum laude et gloria*. He is the prototype of health, the man who has learned to live without belief and without truth, and, superhumanly delighting in life "as such," actually *wills* the Eternal Recurrence: "Live in such a way that you desire nothing more than to live this very same life again and again!" The Superman, having attained to this manner of existence which is exemplary and alluring into all eternity, despises his former self for craving moral sanctions, for satisfying his will to power in neurotic sublimation, for deceiving himself about the "meaning" of life.

What will he be then, this man who at last knows what life *really* is? Recalling Nietzsche's own accounts of all-too-human nature, and his analysis of the threadbare fabric of traditional values and truths, may he not be the very monster of nihilism, a barbarian, not necessarily blond, but perhaps a conqueror of the world, shrieking bad German from under his dark moustache? Yes, Nietzsche feared his approach in history: the vulgar caricature of the Superman. And because he also feared that the liberally decadent and agnostically disbelieving heirs to Christian morality would be too feeble to meet the challenge, having enfeebled the idea of civilized existence and rendered powerless the good, he sent forth from his imagination the Superman to defeat the defeat of man.

Did Nietzsche himself *believe* in the truth of his doctrines of the Superman and the Eternal Recurrence? In one of his posthumously published notes he says of the Eternal Recurrence: "We have produced the hardest possible thought —the Eternal Recurrence of All Things—now let us create the creature who will accept it lightheartedly and joyfully!" Clearly, there must have been times when he thought of the Eternal Recurrence not as a "Truth" but as a kind of spiritual Darwinian test to select for survival the spiritually fittest. There is a note of his which suggests precisely this: "I perform the great experiment: who can bear the idea of the Eternal Recurrence?" This is a measure of Nietzsche's own unhappiness: the nightmare of nightmares was to him the idea that he might have to live his identical life again and again; and an ever deeper insight into the anatomy of despair we gain from this note: "Let us consider this idea in its most terrifying form: existence, as it is, without meaning or goal, but inescapably recurrent, without a finale into nothingness.... Those who cannot bear the sentence, There is no salvation, *ought* to perish!" Indeed, Nietzsche's Superman is the creature strong enough to live forever a cursed existence and even to transmute it into the Dionysian rapture of tragic acceptance. Schopenhauer called man the *animal metaphysicum*. It is certainly true of Nietzsche, the renegade *homo religiosus*. Therefore, if God was dead, then for Nietzsche man was an eternally cheated misfit, the diseased animal, as he called him, plagued by a metaphysical hunger to feed which all the Heavens may be ransacked without result. Such a creature was doomed: he had to die out, giving way to the Superman who would miraculously feed on barren fields and finally conquer the metaphysical hunger itself without any detriment to the glory of life.

Did Nietzsche himself *believe* in the Superman? In the manner in which a poet believes in the truth of his creations. Did Nietzsche believe in the truth of poetic creations? Once upon a time when, as a young man, he wrote *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche did believe in the power of art to transfigure life by creating lasting images of true beauty out of the meaningless chaos. It had seemed credible enough as long as his gaze was enraptured by the distant prospect of classical Greece and the enthusiastic vicinity of Richard Wagner's Tribschen. Soon, however, his deeply romantic belief in art turned to scepticism and scorn; and his unphilosophical anger was provoked by those "metaphysical counterfeiters," as he called them, who enthroned the trinity of beauty, goodness, and truth. "One should beat them," he said. Poetic beauty *and* truth? No, says Zarathustra, "poets lie too much"—and

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adds dejectedly: "But Zarathustra too is a poet. . . . *We lie* too much." And he did: while Zarathustra preached the Eternal Recurrence, his author confided to his diary: "I do not wish to live *again*. How have I borne life? By creating. What has made me endure? The vision of the Superman who affirms life. I have tried to affirm life *myself*—but ah!"

Was he, having lost God, capable of truly believing in anything? "He who no longer finds what is great in God will find it nowhere; he must either deny it or create it." Only the "either-or" does not apply. All his life Nietzsche tried to do both. He had the passion for truth and no belief in it. This is the stuff from which demons are made—perhaps the most powerful secret demon eating the heart out of the modern mind. To have written and enacted the greater story of this mind—a German mind—is Nietzsche's true claim to greatness. "The Don Juan of the Mind" he once called, in a "fable" he wrote, a figure whose identity is hardly in doubt:

> The Don Juan of the Mind: no philosopher or poet has yet discovered him. What he lacks is the love of the things he knows, what he possesses is *esprit*, the itch and delight in the chase and intrigue of knowledge—knowledge as far and high as the most distant stars. Until in the end there is nothing left for him to chase except the knowledge which hurts most, just as a drunkard in the end drinks absinth and methylated spirits. And in the very end he craves for Hell—it is the only knowledge which can still seduce him. Perhaps it too will disappoint, as everything that he knows. And if so, he will have to stand transfixed through all eternity, nailed to disillusion, having himself become the Guest of Stone, longing for a last supper of knowledge which he will never receive. For in the whole world of things there is nothing left to feed his hunger.

It is a German Don Juan, this Don Juan of the Mind; and it is amazing that Nietzsche should not have recognised his features: the features of Goethe's Faust at the point at which he has succeeded at last in defeating the plan of salvation.

And yet Nietzsche's work, wrapped in paradox after paradox, taking us to the limits of what is still comprehensible and often beyond, carries elements which issue from a centre of sanity. No doubt, this core is in perpetual danger of being crushed, and was in fact destroyed in the end. But it is there, and is made of the stuff of which goodness is made. Nietzsche once said that he had spent all his days in philosophically *taking sides against himself*. Why? Because he was terrified by the prospect that all the better things in life, all honesty of mind, integrity of character, generosity of heart, fineness of æsthetic perception, would be corrupted and finally cast away by the new barbarians, unless the mildest and gentlest hardened themselves for the war which was about to be waged against them: "Cæsar with the heart of Christ!"

Time and again we come to a point in Nietzsche's writings when the shrill tones of the rebel are hushed by the still voice of the autumn of a world waiting in calm serenity for the storms to break. Then this tormented mind relaxes in what he once called the *Rosengeruch des Unwiederbringlichen*—an untranslatably beautiful lyricism of which the closest equivalent in English is perhaps Yeats'

> *Man is in love and loves what vanishes.*
> *What more is there to say?*

In such moments the music of Bach brings tears to his eyes and he brushes aside the noise and turmoil of Wagner; or he is, having deserted Zarathustra's cave in the mountains, enchanted by the gentle grace of a Mediterranean coastline. Contemplating the quiet lucidity of Claude Lorrain, or seeking the company of Goethe in conversation with Eckermann, or comforted by the composure of Stifter's *Nachsommer*, a Nietzsche emerges, very different from that who used to inhabit the fancies of Teutonic schoolboys and, alas, schoolmasters, a Nietzsche who is a traditionalist at heart, a desperate lover who castigates what he loves because he knows it will abandon him and the world. It is the Nietzsche who can with one sentence cross out all the dissonances of his apocalyptic voices: "I once saw a storm raging over the sea, and a clear blue sky above it; it was then that I came to dislike all sunless, cloudy passions which know no light, except the lightning."

In these regions of his mind dwells the terror that he may have helped to bring about the very opposite of what he desired. Then he is much afraid of the consequences of his teaching. Perhaps the best will be driven to despair by it, the very worst accept it? And once he put into the mouth of some imaginary titanic genius what is his most terrible prophetic utterance: "Oh grant madness, you heavenly powers! Madness, that at last I may believe in myself. . . . I am consumed by doubts, for I have killed the Law . . . if I am not more than the Law, then I am the most abject of all."

What, then, is the final importance of Nietzsche? For one of his readers it lies in his example which is so strange, profound, confounded, alluring, and forbidding that it can hardly be looked upon as exemplary. But it cannot be ignored either. For it has something to do with lucidly living in the dark age of which he so creatively despaired.

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THEATRE

The Opulent Culture

Does the "German System" Really Work? — By SIEGFRIED MELCHINGER

I WAS REMINDED during one of those perennial discussions here about "problems of present-day German theatre," of a recent visit to London where I had gone to see *Hamlet* at Olivier's new National Theatre. What a sense of excitement one had each time one went to the theatre in London! I listened to my British friends' eager questions, their praise of our own German theatre system (certain fundamental principles of which seemed to have been taken over by the National Theatre). Then, on my return home, what inertia suddenly surrounded me—an inertia which seems to point to a chronic, if not hopeless, sickness in the German theatre.

Why is there in the London theatre this atmosphere of *excitement*? How and why does it communicate itself to audiences even on not very successful nights? And why, on the other hand, do so many of our performances seem to drag and flag, perfunctorily acclaimed by audiences who have come to expect nothing better?

These questions, I think, are not difficult to answer. Your actors in London try, as it were, to give the performance of their lives every night of the week; whereas ours, whom the *system* has turned into civil servants, don't exert themselves unduly. They have a year's contract; they have paid holidays; many of them can look forward to a pension; none can be dismissed. Of course, this oversimplifies the case for and against our theatre system. One hardly ever appreciates the things one has; one envies others for their blessings. I think I know the advantages of the German theatre and the disadvantages of the Anglo-American theatre fairly well. But it will not, I hope, be held against an admirer of London theatre if he expresses the view that the disadvantages of the German theatre system, if adopted in England, might one day affect the London theatre too.

The most important difference between the two systems is also the obvious one: the continuous run on the one hand and the repertory programme on the other. Most German theatres run several plays in series during one season, which obliges theatres to keep together an ensemble on long-term contracts. Each actor has a part in several plays in the repertory. Leading theatres have a first night every three or four weeks. As a rule, the director is given between three and five weeks for rehearsals. Clearly, this expenditure cannot be met without subsidies. According to statistics, annual theatre subsidies from public money in medium-sized towns amount to 21s. per head. The grand total is very large indeed: total subsidies amounted to roughly £25,000,000 during the last season. The sum increases every year. Since 1945, more than a hundred theatres have been rebuilt, many costing more than £1,000,000. Our government, evidently, takes an extraordinarily keen interest in theatre. Even the peasant in a remote village makes his contribution—so that the nearest town (which he rarely, if ever, visits) can maintain a theatre with an ensemble and full repertory programme. The recovery of all costs through the box office would be possible only in cities with more than a million inhabitants. But even there, with the high cost of material and heavy social-service contributions, tickets would actually cost far more than the public is willing to pay.

A REALISTIC ASSESSMENT of our system is possible only if one takes into account the reasons for it, and considers the situation arising therefrom. The most important reason is historical: the

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system has a tradition of 250 years behind it. There are about 63 towns in the *Bundesrepublik* which maintain subsidised theatres; and this goes back to the structure of the old *Reich*, composed of greater and lesser principalities. The princely rulers prided themselves on their theatres and vied with their neighbours in the splendour of their productions. Absolutism is the historical reason why, even to-day, country towns of barely 5,000 inhabitants still have fully subsidised, functioning theatres. Groups of former itinerant players became permanent ensembles. Inevitably, theatrical life gradually lost its feudal character. As early as the beginnings of the 19th century the Prussian king had dedicated his Berlin *Hoftheater* (Court Theatre) "to the pleasure of my subjects." (Incidentally, Frederick the Great had already renounced his royal box at Potsdam and taken his seat in the fifth row of the stalls.)

With the growth of towns and the expansion of capitalism, the middle classes infiltrated into the *Hoftheater*. To-day, there is no difference between the larger Municipal Theatres and the National Theatres (all "Court Theatres" became "National Theatres" in 1918), either in artistic or financial standing. About the middle of the last century, many private theatres were founded to compete with Court and Municipal theatres, particularly in Berlin. They were run on purely commercial lines. Almost all failed; but a few survived and even made a modest profit. However, the greatest figure of the German private theatre, Max Reinhardt, "the Great Magician," was not a product of this tradition. Another impulse was needed for the German theatre to reach the golden age at the beginning of the 20th century. And here, for the first time, we have to speak of "the theatre as an art form."

DURING A RECENT discussion of this subject, Kenneth Tynan (*Encore,* 1963) cited the example of Lessing (who worked as literary director in Hamburg with one of the best German companies between 1767 and 1769) in the struggle to establish a national theatre. Lessing acted not only as the company's adviser in the selection of plays, he also tried to awaken public interest in the theatre by writing those famous essays in dramatic criticism, the *Hamburger Dramaturgie*, which are to this day the model of all German theatre criticism. Regrettably, Lessing was asked by the actors after only a short time to restrict himself to the appraisal of plays; and the whole enterprise failed soon afterwards. But since then, "civic theatre activity," as Tynan calls it, has never entirely disappeared from German theatre life. Educated members of the middle classes, inspired by the Weimar classicists and by the romantics, began to crowd the theatres and the young people, who demonstrated their enthusiasm from the gallery, gradually demanded the right to be heard. With more pronounced class differences and increasing organisation of the working classes, the young intelligentsia turned to the left. By the 'eighties, a situation had arisen which can only be described as explosive. The artificiality of the *Hoftheater* had become intolerable and standards had deteriorated generally. Princes still set the trend, and the burghers tried to emulate. The relatively small audiences consisted of country gentry, bankers, manufacturers. The *Volk* were excluded from the leading theatres. Cities like Berlin, Vienna, and Munich had theatres in the suburbs. But Viennese playwrights of genius like Raimund and Nestroy, to-day considered classics, were barred from the *Kaiserliche Hoftheater*. Instead, these theatres produced stale, moralistic Victorian comedies. In literature, a new style had long since established itself; but even towards the end of the Naturalist period, Ibsen's censor-banned plays had not yet been produced on the stage. The theatre tried to isolate itself from the general cultural evolution and, pandering to a hypocritical and doomed society, soon degenerated into a commodity of cheap entertainment.

In 1882, as a first protest against this development, prominent Berlin actors (following Lessing) formed a society to found the *Deutsches Theater*. (Even before this the "Meininger" ensemble had caused a sensation with their performances of the classics in the style of "historical naturalism.") The second protest had significant consequences. In 1889—following the example of the Parisian Antoine—Berlin intellectuals, led by Otto Brahm, founded an association called the *Freie Buehne* and proceeded to perform Ibsen and other banned authors to "closed audiences," thus bypassing censorship. The theatre opened with Ibsen's *Ghosts*, and during a performance of Gerhart Hauptmann's first play, *Before Sunrise*, there was an uproar such as had not been witnessed before in a Berlin theatre. That night marked the turning point and determined the future of the German theatre. Modern playwrights had carried the day. Soon afterwards, Otto Brahm took over the *Deutsches Theater*, and he was succeeded by Max Reinhardt in 1905. The golden age of the German theatre grew out of Lessing's concept of actors and authors working in close collaboration, on the one hand, and, on the other, the desire of modern intellectuals for a theatre of high artistic and literary merit which would reflect the times. Not even Hitler succeeded in removing the last traces of the greatness of the German theatre, as the activities of

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Gustaf Gruendgens, Brecht's followers Erich Engel and Caspar Neher and directors Heinz Hilpert, Otto Falckenberg, Walter Felsenstein, and Juergen Fehling (who invited club-footed Goebbels to his mid-war production of *Richard III*) have shown. Following on the establishment of the middle class *Freie Buehne*, the trade-unions' *Volksbuehne* (which to-day has millions of members) was founded in Berlin. The domination of the ruling classes was broken. Theatres now produced all new writing of quality, irrespective of the source. Bernard Shaw transferred the first performances of several of his plays to German theatres. Reinhardt's fame was part of this "civic theatre activity"; Maxim Gorki's *The Lower Depths*, directed by Reinhardt, had a continuous run of 500 performances at a private theatre before it went into the repertory of the *Deutsches Theater*. In the twenties, Leopold Jessner became a worthy rival to Reinhardt as the director of the *Preussische Staatstheater*. Erwin Piscator founded his "Political Theatre," and Brecht set out anew on Lessing's road: a playwright intent on creating his own theatre.

IN THE "GOLDEN TWENTIES" the German theatre was a centre of unrivalled quality and talent, now nostalgically remembered. Growing political tension no doubt helped. An era in which the theatre is a forum for political ideas, and is taken more seriously by intellectuals than the actual field of political conflict, may never return —but it is an ideal of which many theatre people still dream. One still feels: this is what theatre *ought* to be. Moreover, the reasons why it is no longer so, and cannot become so in the foreseeable future, bring us to the disadvantages of the German theatre system.

SINCE 1945, the German theatre has lost the brilliance that comes of intensive artistic rivalry. The loss of Berlin as the capital has meant the loss of the artistic centre which attracted all the talent of the provinces. To-day, Berlin itself is provincial. Vienna too, handicapped by its political isolation, has become provincial. The German-language theatre has many limbs, but no head. Hamburg knows almost nothing of Munich, and Frankfurt knows even less of Cologne. The one has nothing to fear from the other, if only because larger cities set much more store by local prestige than by anything else. It was this preoccupation with prestige which was responsible for the fashion spectacle of the recent Munich *Opernfest* (on the occasion of the re-opening of the *Nationaltheater*). Once again, the ordinary theatre-goer felt shut out. Rarely has the social style of the *Wirtschaftswunder* revealed its vulnerability quite so drastically as here.

AND OF THOSE WHO STILL flock to the theatre, few any longer have anything in common. They hardly know each other. They are strangers, pacing up and down in the foyer during the intervals. They are self-contained individuals, looking forward to an individual experience. This remoteness of the audience is one of the things that apparently drives playwrights into the camp of the *avant-garde*. It is the complaint of all the German theatre directors that "one no longer knows one's audience." Genuine tears and laughter have become a rarity—though when they do occur, it means that actors have succeeded in breaking down the barrier, and that is what every theatre enthusiast secretly hopes for.

Still, it is clearly wrong to assume that only enthusiasts go to the theatre. Many go because they always have; they don't go in a spirit of self-examination or reflection. Particularly those who cling to middle-class conventions (and this *includes* the prosperous prestige-seeking upper layer of the working classes) help to spread this sense of inertia during performances. The English theatre may be similarly afflicted, but there, at least, audiences do not occupy seats wholly or partly paid for from public funds.

If the idea of subsidies is an excellent one, the political agitation behind it is not always without ulterior motive. The *Laender* of the *Bundesrepublik* frequently display an all-too-human penchant for ostentation in the building of their theatres. As modern architecture tends to be austerely functional, the best way to exhibit opulence and demonstrate welfare is by using costly building materials. If the older buildings can be saved, then they are elaborately and expensively restored to former splendour. Spiritual values? These new German theatres only bear witness to the pretentiousness of our *nouveaux riches*. The Bavarian Prime Minister recently spoke of the theatre as "a museum"; the same principle applies to both; expensive, *ergo* good. And the attitude of the audience does resemble that of the man who visits a museum—not because he likes looking at pictures, but because it is considered "the right thing to do." Perhaps one shouldn't set prosperity and culture in hostile juxtaposition. But in the theatre the marriage of prosperity and culture has had only negative consequences: it has created more difficulties than it has solved.

This *listlessness* of the audience is closely connected with that complacency resulting from material security, which has turned actors into

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civil servants and theatres into emporia. Certainly, compared with the precarious financial standing of actors in other countries, the position of the German actor is enviable. The achievements of the German equivalent of Equity (founded in 1871) are remarkable. However, a slackening of artistic effort is inevitable when an actor knows that *it doesn't matter* if he gives a bad performance, or if he succumbs occasionally to the temptation to take things easy. Dismissals without notice are extremely rare, and are incurred only by serious misdemeanours. The non-renewal of a yearly contract is no tragedy: a *schauspieler* can always move to another theatre, another town. There are very few unemployed actors. Even without permanent engagement, an actor will always find a job on radio or television (rather less easily in films, where utter crisis still prevails). Any expansion of social benefits is, of course, to be welcomed. But the certitude of material security does have its negative side. It is with good reason that Fritz Kortner, one of the best-known German directors (and a liberal-progressive) has fiercely protested against the "spirit of trade unionism" among actors.

BUT LET ME speak of the system's advantages. Subsidies do enable German theatres to plan a programme which represents the classic theatre of the past, as well as most present-day international work. Several of Ionesco's plays were first performed in German theatres. The selection of plays is often ambitious —one can afford to be imaginative and original. Of the dramatists of the past, only those really worth reviving are taken up; and pride is taken in new discoveries in both contemporary German and foreign drama. As gambling on a new play can never mean financial ruin, one needn't fear audience reactions. The same audiences I have accused of inertia are unwilling to forgo their visit to the theatre, however outraged they may be by anything "modern." *Succès de scandale* has become the order of the day. There are theatre *Intendanten*—and these by no means the worst—who go all out to provoke public protest if only to jolt people out of their complacency. A great deal has been achieved: the latest annual programme survey of all German-speaking theatres (including the Eastern D.D.R.) shows these plays at the top of the list: Duerrenmatt's *Physicists* (1,598 performances in 59 theatres), Max Frisch's *Andorra* (934), Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* (530), Gerhart Hauptmann's *The Beaver Coat* (469), Peter Ustinov's *Photo Finish* (456). Not a bad list. True, *My Fair Lady* (and two operettas) top the list of musical works, but immediately following them are three operas by Mozart.

The objection that, in a subsidised theatre, the number of performances is less significant than the number of tickets sold, crumbles when one considers that available seating capacity is used up to 80% (against 55–60% in the 'thirties). Last year thirteen leading German theatres performed: 33% classical authors (about 20% Shakespeare with 2,104 performances); 39% contemporary plays (among them 1,222 performances of Brecht, in 58 theatres); 15% plays of the Ibsen–Hauptmann period; and only 12% light comedy (perhaps because cinema and television are a more suitable medium for light comedy). As private theatres receive small subsidies too, they are obliged not only to maintain a small permanent ensemble, usually headed by a prominent "guest artist," but also to include two or three plays of literary merit in their repertory. This means that the subsidised theatre is in a position to offer audiences a varied repertory—a repertory, as Tynan has formulated it for the British National Theatre, "of foreign and English plays, traditional and contemporary, tragedy and comedy, the experimental and the conventional, the unusual and the familiar...." But while the British National Theatre is thus able to set a style distinct from other British theatres, German theatre directors, who know only the repertory programme, are forced to chase after literary sensations and to try and lure them away from each other. And the result of their efforts is often only another kind of conformity.

WHEN I ASKED RECENTLY in London what people considered the "most revolutionary" element in the creation of the National Theatre, I was told: the ensemble company, the essential prerequisite for a comprehensive continuous repertory programme. But British friends of the theatre will be interested to learn that the ideal of a really comprehensive repertory has been achieved by only two German-speaking theatres: the *Schillertheater* in Berlin and the Vienna *Burgtheater*. These theatres have the largest ensembles in their respective countries. Berlin is still the most important theatre centre in Germany; Vienna may surpass it at times, but only in the number of theatres, not, I think, in quality. Both cities have an advantage not enjoyed by other cities: they are centres of film production. (Actually, most of the work done at film studios now is dubbing foreign films.) Actors, playing evenings, are able to supplement their income by working for film studios during the day. In this way, both theatres are able to maintain a large ensemble and to present a varied programme.

I have already mentioned that the number of first nights has declined. The number of

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plays in the repertory has decreased in all theatres (except in Berlin and Vienna). In a medium-sized national or municipal theatre, there will now only be about twelve during a season. (In addition to this, there may be a few more at the "experimental studios," attached to the larger theatres.) But even these plays cannot be performed throughout the entire season, as many ensemble members have only six months (or even shorter-term) contracts. A considerable number of first nights are launched with guest stars, engaged for one or two plays only, who move on to another theatre after the expiration of their contract. This "guest artist system" is often denounced as a flaw in the German system. But this, I feel, is unfair. A system which offers the actor no adequate platform (as did Berlin forty years ago) on which to deploy his talents, is not providing him with all the opportunities he needs. He must change the locus of his activities; he must test himself before a different audience. The more temperamental actors, in particular, prefer a change of scenery in the course of their struggle to reach the top of the profession. Furthermore, cinema and television have altered the audience's taste; people expect star-casting for lead parts. It was an essential feature of the ensemble system that one actor—say, the juvenile lead—played all the roles of his type, from Romeo to Jimmy Porter. Since there are probably few Romeos who are also Jimmy Porters, one prefers to get hold of well-known actors as guest artists, who come as close as possible to the audience's preconceived image. The result, however, is a curtailment of the repertory.[1]

THE ARTISTIC AIM has always been "perfectly co-ordinated ensemble-playing," and performances in which a star is supported by a middling or third-rate company are still rejected by German audiences. It is important that an ensemble company grow into an artistic unit in the course of rehearsal. The effort required of the individual actor is limited nowadays, since rehearsals have become part of a working day in which hours are strictly observed and overtime is fiercely resented. Here, too, the absence of risk is making itself felt. As most actors who rehearse between 10 a.m. and lunch are playing a more or less important part in the repertory (often a different one every night), they tend to save their strength for the evening performance—a phenomenon which will, no doubt, be observed when the National Theatre in London gets under way. Exclusive concentration on a single part is possible only in the continuous run system. Ensembles conveying the sense of being a closely knit unit have become rare. They are usually moulded by a strong personality—by the late Gustaf Gruendgens, for instance. When he left Düsseldorf ten years ago to take over the *Deutsches Theater* in Hamburg, most of the actors engaged by him followed him there. His comment was: "I have my family. My successor, no doubt, will bring his own...." (He has.) This magnetism of the great personality—where the chance of *learning something new* still means more to an actor than the size of his fee—is one of the few positive aspects of German theatre. Personalities like Gruendgens are still to be found; perhaps they will suddenly appear where they are least expected; their existence inspires new hope for the German theatre. There are still quite a number of directors and actors who refuse to surrender to the paralysing effects of material security. There have been cases where a theatre manager risked losing the safe patronage of conservative audiences in order to attract a different type of audience, particularly the young. (In some instances—as in Bremen—this has worked.) The moving force of such personalities is the desire to resuscitate the great traditions of the German theatre, and to make it once more a major contributor to *Welttheater*.

AND IN LONDON? There is, of course, still plenty of genuine competition. Among actors who realise that their career depends on the success of every performance, there is far less slackness. London now has that apparently inexhaustible pool of good actors and actresses Berlin once prided itself on. Many of our German system's disadvantages, therefore, will not apply in London. Indeed, I am tempted to say: the German theatre system, whatever its faults at home, might suit London very well indeed.

[1] Successful plays are usually carried over from one season to the next. Seasons last from September to the end of June or beginning of July. However, plays and productions hardly ever last longer than two seasons—simply because the actors are no longer together in one company.

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hans magnus enzensberger

three new poems

remote house

when i wake up
the house is silent.
only the birds make a noise.
through the window i see
no one. here
no road passes.
there is no wire in the sky
and no wire in the earth.
quiet the living things lie
under the axe.

i put water on to boil.
i cut my bread.
unquiet i press
the red push-button
of the small transistor.

"caribbean crisis . . . washes whiter
and whiter and whiter . . . troops ready to fly out . . .
phase three . . . that's the way i love you . . .
amalgamated steel stocks are back to par. . . ."
i do not take the axe.
i do not smash the gadget to pieces.
the voice of terror
calms me; it says:
we are still alive.

the house is silent.
i do not know how to set traps
or make an axe out of flint,
when the last blade
has rusted.

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bill of fare

one idle afternoon, today
in my house i see
through the open kitchen door
a milk jug a chopping board
a plate for the cat.
a telegram lies on the table
i have not read it.

in a museum at amsterdam
in an old picture i saw
through the open kitchen door
a milk jug a bread basket
a plate for the cat.
a letter lay on the table.
i have not read it.

in a dacha on the moskwa
a few weeks ago i saw
through the open kitchen door
a bread basket a chopping board
a plate for the cat.
a newspaper lay on the table
i have not read it.

through the open kitchen door
i see spilt milk
thirty years' wars
tears on chopping boards
anti-rocket rockets
bread baskets
class wars.

low down in the left corner
i see a plate for the cat.

historical process

the bay is frozen up
the trawlers are ice-bound.
so what.
you are free.
you can lie down.
you can get up again.
it doesn't matter about your name.
you can disappear
and return.
that's possible.
a fighter howls across the island.
even when a man dies
letters still come for him.
there isn't much to be lost or thwarted.
you can sleep.
that's possible.
the ice-breaker will be here by the morning.
then the trawlers will leave.
the channel they follow is narrow.
it freezes up again by the morning.
so what.
it doesn't matter about your name.

translated by Michael Hamburger

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MUSIC

The Gilded Cage

By Peter Heyworth

THE MOOD of overweening self-confidence that afflicted Germany in the years between 1871 and 1914 was based on more than mere power. Complementing the imposing edifice of the Bismarckian Empire were the equally formidable achievements of German *Kultur*. In philosophy, in the natural sciences and, above all, in music, German hegemony seemed as unchallengeable as it had proved on the field of battle, and the grandiloquent dimensions of Berlin of the *Gründerjahre* (so different from the measured gestures of the old Prussian capital) bear outward evidence of that supremacy. As the historian Friedrich Meinecke aptly (and approvingly) put it, there was a synthesis of intellect and power, of culture and the state, each contributing to the greater glory of the whole.

How deep-seated and persistent this conception proved, how apt to recur in the most unlikely persons and unexpected places, is nicely illustrated by Arnold Schoenberg's remark, immediately after he had formulated his method of "composition with twelve notes related only to each other," that "to-day I have discovered something that will ensure the supremacy of German music for the next hundred years." He was not the only Austrian to be thinking on an ample time-scale at that moment. In Landsberg jail Hitler was busy, outlining a future that offered no place to his distinguished compatriot; for by then the rift between *Kulturmenschen* and *Machtmenschen* (the terms are Meinecke's) had already grown too wide for collaboration between the two foundation pillars on which the greatness of Bismarckian Germany had been raised.

In 1933 *Kultur* was finally offered up as a sacrifice on the altar of *Macht*. Among conductors alone the losses were fearful. Of the outstanding group in Berlin only Furtwängler remained. Walter, Blech, Kleiber, Klemperer, and Busch all emigrated, and if standards were to some extent maintained, it was only by ready reinforcements from Austria in the persons of Krauss, Böhm, and later of the *Wunderkind*, Herbert von Karajan. (Austrians seem to pop up in crucial positions in the Third Reich with the frequency of Irish generals in the British Army.)

In the field of composition the results were even more devastating. Schoenberg, Hindemith, and Weill emigrated. Alban Berg died before the *Anschluss* of 1938. Anton Webern was reduced to copying to earn a living, although it was not difficult to silence a composer who was still virtually unperformed. Stravinsky and Bartók were not directly banned, as dodecaphonic music was, but they were frowned on and that was enough. What remained were a couple of ageing representatives of late romanticism, Pfitzner and Strauss, whose creative fires were largely extinguished, and a couple of young Bavarians, Carl Orff—a reputable but narrow talent—and the rather spurious figure of Werner Egk. Like all totalitarian régimes, the Nazi government spent lavishly on the arts. But neither the splendours of Bayreuth under Goering's patronage, nor a series of grand Richard Strauss premières, nor continuing high standards of performance, could hide the fact that within a few months Germany, once the hub of European music, had been reduced to a creative desert. An ice age had descended and it was to persist until those terrible days in the spring of 1945, when to an incessant barrage of Wagner on the radio, Hitler pulled down the pillars of the Hall of the Gibichungs on his own head. For the first time history had had the bad taste to imitate opera.

IN THE TEETH of all manner of difficulties and shortages the means of performance were reconstituted with amazing speed. But it took longer to mend the cultural links that the Nazis had severed with such thoroughness. Publishing houses were in ruins, there was no paper for printing, travel from one zone to an-

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other was difficult and visitors were few. Worst of all, the creative sources of German music seemed to have dried up. With one possible exception, there was no one who had written a work of the least importance in Germany during the twelve years of the Third Reich. That exception was Orff (b. 1895). His *Carmina Burana* is an individual hotch-potch of Stravinskian percussion, harmonic medievalisms and Monteverdian melisma, laced with a certain peasant robustness characteristic of the composer's native Bavaria. But the young Germans of 1945 were in no mood for anything redolent of atavism; and, rather unfairly, because his music has a distinct if rather meagre quality of its own, Orff has since sunk to the level of a provincial figure in a part of Germany much given to cultivating its provincialism. His operas are cherished in Stuttgart and in the rather special atmosphere of Munich, but are not much regarded elsewhere. Indeed his reputation may finally rest more on his educational *Schulwerk* than on his more recent attempts to fashion a new sort of ritualistic music drama.

At first, the predominant outside influences were Paul Hindemith and the neo-classical Stravinsky. Wolfgang Fortner (b. 1907), whose music can usually be relied on to reflect the currents of the moment, in 1947 wrote a symphony that epitomises this period. But it did not last long, for in 1948 René Leibowitz came to the recently founded Darmstadt Summer School for New Music to teach Schoenberg's dodecaphonic method of composition. The effect on young Germans of this first delayed encounter with the greatest German composer of the century was electrifying. It was as if an entire disoriented generation had finally seen the light it had been seeking; and Leibowitz carried off its brightest star, a prodigiously talented youth called Hans Werner Henze, to Paris, where he acquired a technical discipline that was to stand his eclectic creativity in good stead.

It is easy to mock the compulsory progressivism of Darmstadt. But in the late 'forties and early 'fifties it was the forcing house of a revival of German music. Here young German composers met each other, and heard each other's music; here for the first time they encountered the music of Schoenberg and (what was to prove even more crucial) of Webern. Promising young men began to flock from other countries, one or two even from England. Here Pierre Boulez, Luigi Nono, and Karlheinz Stockhausen all made their mark. In a real sense Darmstadt was one of the cultural cells out of which the new Europe was to grow.

A year after Leibowitz a still more important French visitor came to Darmstadt. Olivier Messiaen is a rather isolated figure on the musical scene, but while he was at the summer school he wrote a short piano piece called *Modes de valeurs et d'intensités,* which two years later had its first performance there, and made an impact out of all proportion to its intrinsic merit. In it he subjected the elements of attack, duration, and rhythm to serial treatment comparable to that which Schoenberg had devised for pitch alone. Messiaen himself abandoned the device almost immediately. But for the young Darmstadters it had arrived at a crucial moment and they leapt at it with avidity.

For by this time their early enthusiasm for Schoenberg's dodecaphonic music had given way to a certain disenchantment. They were drawn to serialism but disapproved of his use of it for ends that often seemed disturbingly reminiscent of the Viennese classics. It was, they claimed, not Schoenberg but Webern who had put the new technique to more fruitful purpose, for in his severe and sparse handling of dodecaphonic methods there were no deliberate, overt reminiscences of the past. But how was Webern's exquisite mandarin style, so perfect within its narrow self-prescribed limits, to be further developed? Messiaen's *Modes* seemed to provide an answer. Without pausing to reflect whether a technique that could be applied to pitch because there are twelve notes (no more and no less) in the chromatic scale, could also be applied to musical elements to which the figure twelve has no intrinsic relevance, the young Darmstadters plunged into the straitjacket of total serialism. For the moment it almost looked as though a great stylistic breakthrough had been achieved; and in the process German music seemed not only to have solved the problem of recovering valid roots in its immediate past and of restoring cultural contacts with neighbouring countries, but even to be reasserting its claim to play a leading role in the development of European music.

THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED that has, I think, no precedent in musical history. What had started as an advance on a narrow front in distinctly esoteric territory, achieved by a handful of musicians in a small provincial town, was suddenly embraced by the country's musical potentates (and that meant, first and foremost, the radio bosses) and raised to the status of a new orthodoxy. The seven radio stations which the Allied policy of cultural decentralisation had bequeathed to the Federal Republic, and which were heirs to a proud tradition of regional rivalry, took the lead. They were rich; they were independent of audiences; they had excellent orchestras; they were eager to establish themselves as enlightened and liberal patrons of the arts and at the same time had no objection to

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doing their rivals in the eye. In no time they were competing fiercely for the honour of giving first performances of works by Darmstadt composers. Post-Webernian serialism had been launched.

HOW DID THIS small *avant-garde* with its strongholds in the radio stations come to dominate a large part of German musical life to the point of imposing on it a new, sectarian orthodoxy? This is something that English musicians, with their more conservative cast of mind, find difficult to understand. But a country's attitude to contemporary art inevitably reflects historical experiences, and these have been very different in the cases of England and Germany. In England, it is easy to see how the gradualness of our political evolution has made us suspicious of radical innovation. We prefer to sit on the sideline for a bit to see how things will turn out. And, while that may pay off in the field of politics, in music it too often means that we are only willing to approach situations of creative ferment as the volcanic period is dying and the fruits are ripe for academic dissection. (*Viz.* our reverent attitude to-day to Stravinsky and Schoenberg, our *bêtes-noirs* of yesterday.)

The German experience is directly contrary. During the 19th century, Central Europe was the focal point of a systematic exploitation of the resources of chromaticism. At each step in this gradual emancipation of dissonance the conservatives held up their hands in horror. At each step the innovators, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, Liszt, Strauss, Mahler, Schoenberg and Webern showed them to be wrong—wrong, that is, in that the innovators produced more works of genius than the conservatives, who have little to boast of except Brahms, himself a less "reactionary" figure than is sometimes assumed. This long process has left German musicians with a deep-seated Hanslick complex, comparable to the political belief, nourished by so many English intellectuals, that virtue is by definition on the Left. As if this were not enough, the mere fact that the Nazis had in effect banned modern music was by a natural process of reaction sufficient to make post-war Germany cultivate it. At its most negative a mere desire not to appear unenlightened, at its more positive a laudable determination to do their best for the music of their time, have led the majority of German musical functionaries to put their eggs in the progressive basket. As the Germans never do anything by halves, the results have been spectacular.

MUCH SERIAL MUSIC is fantastically hard to perform. But the more difficulties composers have put in the way of performers, the more assiduously German radio choirs and orchestras have laboured to overcome them. It is said that the Cologne Radio Choir rehearsed Nono's *Canto Sospeso* for over nine months; if so, it is hardly surprising that in seven years it is still the only choir to have performed it. As a result, Germany rapidly became a land of milk and honey for struggling young composers from abroad. Whereas at home they could expect little more than an occasional chaotic and under-rehearsed performance before a handful of colleagues and critics, in Germany they found not only commissions, powerful publishers and the resources their works called for, but a respectful welcome as visiting celebrities. Boulez was installed as *Hauskomponist* of Dr. Strobel's establishment at Baden-Baden Radio; and Italian composers like Nono spend a sizeable part of the year crossing and re-crossing the Brenner.

Much of this has its good side. The German radio stations offer the sort of protection that modern music badly needs if it is to emerge from the deep and prolonged crisis that has afflicted it over the past half-century. Certainly, it is comforting to know that far-out young composers are to-day not obliged to go through the years in the wilderness that Schoenberg and Webern had to endure. Both in the matter of commissioning new works and, even more important, in the time, money, and energy put into rehearsal, the Germans have shamed some of their more sluggish neighbours into reform. I doubt, for instance, whether the light of the B.B.C. would to-day shine with such bright virtue were it not for the example set by Hamburg, Cologne, and Baden-Baden.

BUT ARE these hot-house conditions, which offer a composer everything except an audience that actually pays for its tickets, necessarily the most effective means of bridging the gulf between creator and consumer? Or do they serve only to perpetuate the gulf by enabling composers to dispense with an audience? In music as elsewhere, he who pays the piper calls the tune, and the patronage offered by the German radio stations sometimes seems positively calculated to encourage composers to write in sterilised isolation wards, divorced from the pressures of musical life as they exist in the world outside. Isolation is, of course, often the fate of a genius who outstrips his time. But it is the result of genius and not necessarily a condition that fosters it. On the contrary, it is more likely to call forth the sort of creative licence and irresponsibility that has of late become increasingly apparent.

The avidity with which present-day Germany, headed by the radio stations, leaps at first performances of almost anything new and far-out

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makes a refreshing contrast to the suspicious response that is still so characteristic of some English institutions. Indeed, in the last resort, the German approach seems to me the less unhealthy: at least it has the virtue of curiosity. But in Germany *Avantgardismus* is sometimes carried to a point where a more traditional composer hardly gets a fair hearing. Much of Hindemith's later music may be sententious and dull. Still, as the creator of a recognisable personal style, he remained a figure of world significance. Yet, on the occasion of the first performance of his big Kepler opera, *Die Harmonie der Welt* (in Munich in 1957), he was offered up by the German press as a sacrificial victim on the altar of serialism. In comparison, the treatment accorded Sir William Walton by the London press in recent years is positively benign. The fact of the matter is that Germany has never been much of a place for nonconformism, and, even if one feels (as I am inclined to) that the general sense of musical perspective is sounder and less provincial than in England, it offers little *Lebensraum* for minorities. Thus while German opera houses compete for the right to give the first performance of a quite mediocre work in an "advanced" idiom, only a single theatre other than Munich (and that a rather modest one) has put on *Die Harmonie der Welt*. The contrast between this distinctly off-hand treatment of a major figure like Hindemith with the respectful reception given to the chic, neo-Webernian patter of the chameleon-like Fortner's *In seinem Garten liebt Don Perlimplin Belisa* suggests that a rather uncritical conformism is at work.

Is IT UNFAIR to suspect that behind this compulsive progressivism there sometimes lurks a vague but proud conception of a vigorous, enlightened, and forward-looking Germany regaining the position she once held of undisputed musical arbiter of Europe—of, maybe, the resources of *Kultur* redressing the deficiencies of *Macht*? Perhaps this is an ungenerous thought. Bonn is by no means the only government to use cultural facilities as an arm of policy, and in any case the beneficiaries of the openhandedness with which it makes available the magnificent instruments that German energy and *Gründlichkeit* have created for the performance of modern music have little cause for complaint. More than one Italian festival would have come to a full stop without it.

Yet there is something disturbingly contrived about a movement whose main movers are not composers but cultural bureaucrats. It is this that sets total serialism apart from all the other minority currents that are a feature of the arts in the 20th century. For instance, the movement headed by Schoenberg stems from his own achievements: a work like *Pierrot Lunaire* released a zone of creative energy that was seized on and exploited by lesser figures. Such indeed is the very essence of a movement. But when one turns to look for works that have played a comparable role in the total serialism of the 'fifties, it becomes plain that they don't exist, and this for the simple reason that, at the very moment when propagandists and critics were laying down immutable laws of what was rather unnervingly termed *punktuelle* music, the composers most closely associated with it, Boulez and Stockhausen, were quietly getting off the bandwagon. Just as Henze had failed the progressive establishment by refusing to join it and had given notice of the fact in a tart reminder to Darmstadt that "music is written not by groups but by individuals," so at a later stage Boulez (who was already living in Germany) and Stockhausen sought to break free from the stifling embrace of the serialist techniques they had themselves fashioned less than six years earlier. At Darmstadt in 1957 Stockhausen's new *Klavierstücke XI* and a lecture by Boulez, entitled *Alea*, heralded the latest phase of modernism, "aleatoric" music, in which certain elements are left to chance or to the whim of the performer.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, the bureaucrats, critics, and publicists were equal to this abrupt reversal of front. A torrent of æsthetic theorising was unloosed, much of it disturbingly similar in its dogmatic tone and arrogant dismissal of all who failed to toe the line to that which had previously served *punktuelle* music. Whereas only a few years back we had been bidden to admire the iron rigour (one could hardly deny it) of totally serial works, now the emphasis was all on chance and freedom. Whereas in the mid-'fifties any young composer who did not subscribe to serialism was dismissed as a dodo, to-day young composers are liable to deny that they have ever so much as touched a series with the outraged indignation of a man who finds himself accused of incest.

OF COURSE these changing currents of taste sweep the ranks of young composers elsewhere. But in Germany the situation is aggravated by the very weight of the *Apparat* at their disposal. The liberty of action that this permits is virtually absolute. But, lacking the disciplines imposed by tonality or serialism or even by the presence of a non-specialist, paying audience, is it *liberty* that the advanced composer needs to-day? Or have the "ideal" conditions offered by the German radio stations and festivals merely enabled him to evade the crisis in communication that underlies the troubles afflicting Western music, and to take refuge in

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the sort of footling experimentation that seems to despair of its very possibility? It is beginning to look as though the conditions that were fashioned to nurse advanced music through this crisis are proving a cage rather than a conservatory. As a result Germany to-day is a country with unequalled resources for the performance of modern music, but with something suspiciously like a creative vacuum at its centre. The tenderly nursed talents have for the most part failed to flower.

Only one composer of real stature has escaped the kiss of death: Hans Werner Henze (b. 1926). And it is significant that although he was to a limited extent a product of Darmstadt, he soon broke with neo-Webernian serialism and in 1952 went to live in Italy. Henze is not the first German composer to respond to the sirens of the South, and there is a certain naïvety in his claims for the Italian qualities of his essentially German music. (The revised version of *König Hirsch*, an opera of Wagnerian proportions with a libretto whose impenetrable symbolism makes *Die Frau ohne Schatten* seem lucidity itself, has even been re-christened *Il Re Cervo*.) What Italy has in fact provided is liberation from the doctrinaire atmosphere of the German advanced guard. It has enabled him to breathe a more cosmopolitan air. In Ischia he found himself a neighbour of both W. H. Auden and Sir William Walton. He got to know Luchino Visconti, with whom he did an unsuccessful ballet, *Maratona di Danza*. He wrote *Ondine* for the Royal Ballet.

Henze has, of course, been sharply attacked for an eclecticism that certainly has its facile moments. But in a period when few composers of his generation have managed to create any contact with a non-specialist audience, much of his strength lies precisely in an ability to draw nourishment from a bewildering variety of sources. Almost anything is grist to his mill. Jazz, ballet, neo-classical Stravinsky, collaboration with Auden on *Elegy for Young Lovers* (they are now at work on an opera on *The Bacchae*) have all served to broaden his idiom and to dilute the characteristically German expressionism of his earlier music, though this remains evident in the rather steamy sensuality of his lyricism. But his Schoenbergian upbringing is still apparent in his general manner of handling material and it has served as a solid technical foundation for a creativity that is still occasionally apt to fly off at a tangent.

As a result, Henze is to-day almost the only composer of consequence of his generation who has managed to evade a sterile traditionalism without allowing himself to be forced into any of the advanced sects that have figured so prominently in Germany during the past decade. He alone seems able to move with assurance over a wide front. But as virtually the sole provider of music that is at once genuinely new and yet able to attract a non-specialist audience, he is perilously successful—a true child of the *Wirtschaftswunder*. Henze's technical accomplishment and inventive resource are formidable, but the coming years will show whether he can withstand the ceaseless demands that are made on his gifts by festivals, orchestras and opera houses alike; whether he will mature into greatness or, like Richard Strauss at a comparable point in his career, decline into mere fluency.

A GREAT DEAL rests on his shoulders. It will be many years before it becomes plain whether the *avant-garde* headed by Stockhausen has (as I am inclined to suspect) run itself into a dead end from which it will not easily escape, or whether it is in fact fashioning a bridgehead into the future, and in the meantime none of the senior German composers look like filling the gap. Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), who made so much of the running in the Weimar Republic, set himself up in his last years as doctrinaire conservative, without producing works that might have given his position real creative significance. Both Karl Amadeus Hartmann (1905–1963) and Boris Blacher (b. 1901) have been admirable influences on the general quality of musical life of post-war Germany. Hartmann was a man of singular honesty of purpose and breadth of mind, but he occupied a terrain that extends from Bartók to Berg with more vigour than subtlety. Blacher writes music whose clarity, coolness, economy, and rhythmic liveliness offer a natural antidote to the degenerative diseases to which German romanticism has been prone in its declining years. But none of these senior figures have produced much music of moment in recent years, or quite fulfilled the role of *doyen*; and perhaps as a result of the stagnation imposed on the nation's cultural life by the Third Reich, there is a long and unoccupied gap between them and the composers who have emerged since the war.

It has indeed proved easier to reconstruct the great executive arm of German music than to breathe new life into its creative heart. Because it was so intimately associated with romanticism and basked for so long in its triumphs, German music was profoundly shaken by its decline and fall, and the Nazis struck at what was in any case a critical moment in its evolution. But essentially its crisis is the same as that which to-day confronts Western music as a whole. The hour is long past (in the arts as well as in other fields) when one Western European country can afford to view the difficulties of another with smugness or satisfaction.

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Psalm

That from the seed of men
No man
And from the seed of the olive tree
No olive tree
Shall grow,
This you must measure
With the yardstick of death.

Those who live
Under the earth
In a capsule of cement,
Their strength is like
A blade of grass
Whipped by snow in a blizzard.

The desert now will be history.
Termites with their pincers
Write it
On sand.

And no one will enquire
Into a species
Eagerly intent
On self-extinction.

Peter Huchel

On Certain Survivors

When the man
Was dragged out from under
The debris
Of his shelled house,
He shook himself
And said:
Never again.

At least, not right away.

Günter Kunert

The Peacock

From Germany's ashes I saw no phoenix rise.
Stirring the ash with my foot
I uncovered glimmering fins, uncovered horns and pelts—
yet I saw a peacock, who whirling ashes
with one wing made of wood and one of iron,
growing gigantic whipped the flaky cinders
wherever fires were alight, and preened his plumage.

From Germany's ashes I saw old crows creep out
and bristly nightingales with throats grown hoarse
and cocks with swordfish beaks and featherless combs
to whistle and to sing in praise of birds.
I saw them root in ashes of those fires
the wind swept through, and drive cold smoke
over wide spaces where little was gold that glittered

From Germany's ashes I saw no phoenix rise;
yet saw a peacock in the shining season of his plumage,
and saw the radiance as he spread his tail
against a murk of ice-grey skies and northern lights,
and heard the jubilation of crows and sparrows, and saw
flocks of magpies fall on his golden feathers
lice grow darkly out of his plumage
man-sized ants devour his eyes.

Christoph Meckel
translated by Michael Hamburger

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NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from Hamburg

In Lieu of Robbins

ANYONE, like myself, who has had the benefit of both a German and an English education must, at some point, have asked himself: if it had been a question of "either/or," would I rather have gone to school and university in England, or in Germany?

For education up to the age of sixteen, I think I'd plump for Germany. Of course, this is to make a virtue of necessity. The fact is, scarcely a single German high school still has a reputation outside its immediate vicinity; and there's nothing comparable to the British public school. This makes it supremely unimportant for boys and girls in which part of Germany they grow up and whether their parents have any money. The leaving exams from such schools (the *Abitur*) are equal, not only before the law, but also as regards social prestige and admission to university.

Still, in cases where parents have very little money, the picture *does* look somewhat different. Scholarships and grants are notoriously underdeveloped in Germany. For the German schoolboy, there's no equivalent to the scholarship to Eton (or another public school). A few *Länder* of the *Bundesrepublik* have contrived, with much toil and trouble, to abolish school fees, provide free equipment and what not. But the operative question in a working-class family (and these still exist, even if more and more workers are wearing white shirts and double-breasted suits these days) remains: "Why let a boy's schooling drag on, when he could be earning money for the family?" State-paid fees and free equipment are not going to help the father with an average income to answer this question. No one interested in these matters will be surprised, therefore, to learn from the Robbins Report that in no other country in Western Europe do fewer children receive higher education than in Germany. Nevertheless, given a father with a slightly above-average income, it *may* be slightly more advantageous to go to school in Germany. For job opportunities are not reduced by so much as one per cent if, instead of getting into Winchester or Rugby, a boy has to endure the boredom of his local *Oberschule* (secondary school).

At the end of one's school career there stands the *Abitur*, the examination that alone determines whether or not a young German can continue his education. Personally, I'd prefer to have done my school-leaving exam in England or in France (though so far I've failed to detect a similar preference among my compatriots). In Germany, every school has its own *Abitur*. Thus the examiner who decides which pupil shall pass his *Abitur*, and the teacher who has been teaching him, are in fact (in spite of certain checks imposed by the local education authorities) one and the same person. Granted, one's own teachers are in general better disposed than any more-or-less-anonymous examining board. But precisely this situation seems to me to have had consequences often attributed to a highly dubious "German national character."

After all, to be simultaneously teacher and examiner is bound to lead to a certain schizophrenia—it is like being defence counsel and judge at one and the same time. And any reasonably intelligent pupil quickly discovers that nothing is quite so important as getting on the right side of the teacher, his prospective examiner. The same applies to the university student, not so much in the case of the *"Staatsexam,"* but certainly in the case of the universities' own internal exams which determine, for example, which students will one day end up as professors. Needless to say, the system is self-perpetuating; and it is hardly coincidental that moral courage in the face of authority was never, in my country, a prerogative of the academic. The exceptions to this—the famous "Göttingen Seven" in the 19th century, or the wartime "White Rose" resistance group—only serve to show up the extent to which German universities in general have been putty in the hands of the *Obrigkeit*.

BUT TO GET BACK to the school. It *does* seem somewhat unjust that a pupil from a well-known school of high academic standing (like, says, Hamburg's *Johanneum*), once having passed his *Abitur*, has neither more nor less opportunities open to him than the product of some second-rate cramming institution. But this possible injustice is worth swallowing, I think, for the sake of the equality of opportunity which *does* exist in this country—at any rate among those who have done their *Abitur*.

After the *Abitur*, again, the young German seems to have the advantage. Eighteen universities are open to him: Heidelberg, Freiburg, Tübingen, Marburg, Würzburg, Kiel, Göttingen, Erlangen, Münster, Bonn, Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Mainz, Giessen, Saarbrücken, and Berlin's Free University. Three more are to be added within the next few years: Bochum, Bremen, Constance. When I say "Germany," of course, I'm referring to the

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Bundesrepublik. Naturally, the citizen of Leipzig or Dresden (though what's "natural" about that?) can't study at any of the above universities. For him there remain: Leipzig, Rostock, Greifswald, Jena, Halle, and Berlin (East). I need hardly add that these six universities are in their turn barred to the girl from Munich or the young man from Cologne. In addition, there are open to the *Abitur*-holder about a dozen Technical Colleges, which have attained university status (in other words, the right to confer academic honours).

In this respect, the Germans have up till now been ahead of the English. But if the recommendations of the Robbins Report are adopted, then Britain will have at one blow an enormous head-start.[1]

The *Abitur*-holder, then, has complete freedom of choice as to where and what to study. This freedom represents a part of that famed *"Akademische Freiheit"* which has been one of the main characteristics of the German university since the time of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1809). Alas, like other forms of freedom in our apparently inexorably converging social systems, this freedom too is being gradually throttled.

"The beauty of the German system," an English friend once wrote to me, "lies in the fact that the student can pick his university according to the best teacher in his particular field." I don't think I'm being unduly pessimistic when I say that hardly more than one in a hundred German students takes advantage of this opportunity to-day. Great teachers are becoming rarer, other considerations more pressing; which university will even take me? (Contrary to the principle of "academic freedom," most universities have their *numerus clausus, i.e.*, a rigid limit has been set to new admissions, particularly in scientific and medical faculties.) Will the degree I take there be valid in the *Land* where I want to pursue my career? Will I be able to find digs there? And to pay for them? Or should I try to find a university nearer to my parents' home? What are the chances of a state grant?

The only sphere that still shows this freedom to choose and change universities is known under the heading of "Vacation University." Discussions about the merits of such universities tend to resemble weather forecasts: "For skiing and tobogganning, conditions very favourable...." Munich, with its two universities, owes the fact that it has considerably surpassed London University in size very largely to its delightful environs. Nevertheless, statistics show that more than half of all German university students make no use of the opportunity to change their universities.

Since the time of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the second pillar of the German university has been the doctrine that research and teaching go hand in hand. There's little to be gained from comparing the two countries at this point, since the same myth is sustained in England with equally strong and weak arguments. The academic teacher who encourages his students to take part in his research, and who is in turn inspired by his students to famous discoveries, is a familiar figure: we know him well—from Hollywood films. In short, this dual function, though it grows daily less feasible, serves as a useful piece of wishful thinking—so long as it's not taken too seriously.

More interesting in this context, since it is crucial in any comparison between English and German universities, is the third pillar of the German academic system. I am tempted to call it "The Dictatorship of the Ordinariat." (*"Ordinarius"* is the title given to the head of a department.) But since "Dictatorship" is a dirty word nowadays, even in rather doubtfully democratic circles, I had better refrain from using it. A more friendly description would be to call this third pillar of the German system "the Autonomy of the Faculty." Those who use this term have come to consider this "Autonomy of the Faculty" "the single, most formidable internal obstacle to innovation in the German university."[2] If, instead of using the abstract, vague term "Faculty," this obstacle were called by its proper name, *i.e.*, "the Rule of the Professors," I would have no objection at all to Dahrendorf's characterisation. Admittedly,

[1] At the moment both countries have exactly the same number of universities. But in Germany Technical Colleges are already *included* in this number —and to double the number of universities by 1980, which is the aim of the Robbins Report, has not yet entered anybody's head here. We'll be only too glad if we can manage, without too much wear and tear, to lay the foundations of *ten* new universities by 1980. Britain's anticipated lead will increase still further if the plan to give university status to teachers' training colleges, as well as to Technical Colleges, is carried through. In Germany such a plan would meet with strong opposition.

But then the two countries are at one in that neither is seriously considering turning its art schools or the like into universities. Music and painting are subordinated, all along the line, to the new god of technology. This tallies perfectly with the attitude to education now dominant in both countries—an attitude which has long ceased to be humanistic, and is now becoming even more crudely utilitarian. No amount of after-dinner speeches can obscure this depressing fact.

[2] The Tübingen sociologist, Ralf Dahrendorf, in his short, excellent analysis "Inflexibility and Scope in German Universities" in the *European Journal of Sociology* (III/1962).

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this rigid hierarchy, with its enforced personal dependence, which people like myself (and there are quite a number of us) consider to be so badly in need of reform, hardly affects the students at all: it concerns only the teaching body. But this means that within the structure of the German university—though it still retains some of its ancient splendour—the students are considered, if not totally expendable, at best as a necessary evil. The idea of a *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* has become a poor joke.

No one reading the Robbins Report can fail to realise from its impressively precise analysis (we reputedly "thorough" Germans have not come up with any similarly thorough enquiry!) that English and German universities have most of their problems in common. The majority of these grow out of the pressure on the existing universities. On the one hand, this is regarded as socially and politically desirable. On the other, it is seen as a threat to ancient and respected institutions. One problem, which has little to do with theory, but is among the most intractable in day-to-day practice, is to impress upon Ministers of Finance that the kind of comprehensive, general education which their colleagues (of whatever party) extol in their speeches, requires money—far more money than any minister who is not willing drastically to revise his thinking habits is prepared to allocate in his budget. Another problem, in the past, has loomed large in German discussions of this subject. The "pool of ability," it was always said, does not allow for more students or professors: consequently, plans for expanding the universities have little point. This cliché, which I have always found contradicted by my own observations, has, I think, finally been discredited by the Robbins Report.

But then, who in Germany will read the Robbins Report? We've all become somewhat allergic to treatises on university reform. So much has been written on this theme that no one can hope to cover the whole field—the writings which I have collected for my own use already take up two full metres of bookshelf. In fact, only one of all these writings has had palpable results—the recommendations of the Educational Council (*Wissenschaftsrat*), an independent Commission set up in 1960 on the Anglo-Saxon model. These recommendations at least led to the creation of a few more "parallel professorships." The aim was to lessen the burdens of the notoriously overburdened present occupants of university chairs. But, at the same time, a much more important and much less loudly publicised objective was attained: the Dictatorship of the Ordinariat was knocked on the head. Or, to be more precise, two or three heads were allowed to emerge where before there was only one. A petty victory? Still, two or three heads do at least transform dictatorship and absolute monarchy into something more like oligarchy.

Those of us who still feel optimistic, in spite of adverse criticism, about the future of Germany—and especially about the future of our universities—are hoping that the establishment of new universities (also recommended by the *Wissenschaftsrat*) could represent a further step in the direction of a truly democratic university. Of course, this has yet to happen. We have had two disheartening experiences. Two universities which were founded after the war—Saarbrücken and the Free University of Berlin—raised high expectations. As it turned out, they had no influence whatever on other universities; rather, they tried to emulate them in order to be "accepted."

The truth is—and one stumbles on this again and again—that German universities were founded in the socio-political environment of an absolute monarchy, and in an age when great scholastic achievements were the work of individuals. Consequently, our academic institutions still resemble minuscule solar systems—with satellites and planets revolving round an all-illuminating star. "Team work" is an English concept, for which we have no equivalent in German, linguistically or otherwise. But the pressure of circumstances will and must produce one. The genius, the great individual, the leader—their day has passed, regrettably or not.

On the whole, then, I would prefer to go to school in Germany, but I'd rather go to an English university. (Indeed, I am very grateful to the English for having made this possible, in my case, by enabling me, under various pretexts, to study in Cambridge and London.) However, an imbibed English fair-mindedness compels me to ask whether I would really feel the same way if I had gone to Bristol or Leeds, instead of to London and Cambridge. I fear not; indeed, I'm sure of it. German universities have an advantage which isn't to be lightly discounted—there's absolutely no pecking order among them, let alone an inflexible and unalterable one. The situation in England sometimes suggests, at least to an outsider, that the difference between Oxbridge and Redbrick is rather greater than the difference between Redbrick and no university education at all. In Germany, it doesn't matter where one studies; as long as one stays the course, one graduates as a *Deutscher Akademiker*—for what *that's* worth, nowadays, in the eyes of a wider world.

Rudolf Walter Leonhardt

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GENIUS *has different original germs, depending on the national character and climate, and it develops them in different ways. With the Germans it manifests itself in the roots, with the French in the flower, and with the English in the fruit.*

IMMANUEL KANT (*1798*)

"THE ENGLISH *seem to be well-favoured. We don't see many of them here in Weimar, but what capable and handsome fellows! Even the young with their seventeen years don't seem in these German foreign parts to be estranged or embarrassed; on the contrary, they step into society as full of ease and confidence as if they ruled everywhere and the world belonged to them. That is also what pleases our women so much. I sometimes feel a slight shudder when some female in our family announces the imminent arrival of a new islander. They are dangerous young people, but that is their virtue."*

"But I don't really think [*said Eckermann*] *that these young English are more clever, more educated, have more heart than anybody else."*

"My dear fellow, that's not the point. It's not a matter of birth or of wealth. They simply have the courage to be what nature sets them out to be. There is nothing broken or misshapen about them; they have a completeness. Of course, there are complete fools among them. But the good fortune of personal liberty, the consciousness of English prestige, is all there from the earliest days, and so they are respected both in the family and in school with more happy and liberal results than among us Germans."

J. W. VON GOETHE (*1828*)

THERE IS A *deep characteristic difference between Paris and London. In Paris, Germans and English and Chinese and Turks live and enjoy themselves without giving up a whit of their individuality or nationality. They can even imagine that Paris is there for them, it belongs to them. In England, in London, foreigners are an element to be ignored. There oughtn't to be any foreigners, only Englishmen. The foreigner has to deny and de-nationalise himself completely, to go over to Englishness, if he's to get anywhere. So it is that foreigners who have lived in England, as against in France, appear to us to be much more ridiculous. They have been forced to ape other ways until the antics become second nature.*

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY (*1833*)

I LOOK UPON *England as our old and traditional ally with whom we have no conflicting interests. Germany can be compared to a self-made man, England with an aristocratic lord. We have often stood together, in times of peace and of stress, in the Seven-Years War and at Waterloo, and even now we enjoy the best of relations. For the future, too, this proved community of interests and opinions over long years of history is the best guarantor of understanding.*

OTTO VON BISMARCK (*1885*)

I HAVE BEEN *reading the life of* Thomas Carlyle, *that farce enacted unwittingly and unwillingly, that heroic-ethical interpretation of dyspeptic states. Carlyle, a man of strong words and attitudes, a rhetorician by necessity, perpetually agitated by the desire for a strong faith and his sense of being incapable of it (a typical Romantic in that respect!). The desire for a strong faith is* not *the proof of a strong faith—but rather the opposite. If one* has *a strong faith one can permit oneself the luxury of scepticism: one is sure enough, secure enough, committed enough to be able to afford it. Carlyle deafens something in himself with the* fortissimo *of his hero-worship for men of strong faith and his fury against the less simple-minded: he* needs *a loud noise. A constant, passionate* dishonesty *towards himself—that is his hallmark, this makes and keeps him interesting. True, in England he is admired for his very honesty.... Well, that is English; and in view of the fact that the English are the nation who have perfected* cant, *it is not only understandable but right. At rock bottom Carlyle is an English atheist who puts all his pride into the claim* not *to be one.*

NIETZSCHE (*1889*)

WHAT AN ERROR *to think of England in terms of personal cowardice! England always had the arms it needed, and always fought with success. There was always resolution in battle, and a leadership as ruthless as it was resourceful.*

In Germany, however, we are cultivating in our schools, press, and humour a conception which will prove to be an awful self-deception; for such nonsense is contagious and the consequent under-estimation will have bitter results. This falsification is now so deep that one thinks that in an Englishman one only has before one a cunning and completely cowardly tradesman. But a world empire like the English was not won by sneaky trickery, and this doesn't seem to occur to the lofty teachers of our academic sciences. The few dissenters are ignored or silenced. I remember very well how astonished my comrades were when we had to face the Tommies in Flanders. Even after the first days of battle there dawned in the minds of everyone that these Scots were not exactly the kind of fellow which our reporters and jokesters tried to present to us.

ADOLF HITLER (*1925*)

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Letter from Bonn

Brown Shadows

As I WRITE, one West German Minister has had to resign when unpalatable facts came to light about his Nazi activities in occupied Poland, and another Bonn official, the personal bodyguard attached to Chancellor Erhard, has just hanged himself in his cell, after being arrested for his part in mass shootings of Jews in South Russia. Minister Krüger was a rather influential member of the Bonn cabinet; Peters was a comparatively powerless official, albeit in a position of some responsibility. Both had one thing in common: both were brought down by the trip-rope of their past, after having been able for so long to cover up and conceal its unsavoury details—not only from the public eye and from those responsible for their careers but even perhaps from themselves.

They are by no means the only officials of the Federal Republic to fall victim to their own involvement in the National-Socialist apparatus. There was the case of the *"tiefbraunen"* Minister, Oberländer, and that of the Attorney-General, Fraenkel, who was hustled unceremoniously into retirement. In the very precincts of the "Office for Safeguarding the Constitution," officials have been removed who once held high office in the SS; and officials in other branches of the West German secret service have landed in court when Ulbricht's agents used their Nazi past to blackmail them into treasonable activities. The alarming frequency of such *"Pannen"* raises a host of awkward questions. How could such things happen? How many similar cases are awaiting exposure in the Bonn government? Would it be correct to infer from the "brown shadows" on the X-ray screen of West German democracy that the Federal Republic is really "nothing but a hot-bed of Fascism," somewhat democratically camouflaged?

I would not want to offer an easy answer. It is altogether too *simpliste* to put the blame for such political blunders on to the East German Communists, even if they do hold the damning evidence contained in the Nazi archives and produce the relevant tid-bits only when the target has reached the top rung of the political or administrative ladder. These are the tactics of the Ulbricht set, as crafty as they are malevolent. The fact is that as far as Moscow's satraps in Germany are concerned, it is of little interest when responsible posts in Bonn are taken over by decent people with clean hands; their propaganda interests are far better served when they can let compromised politicians first make a career for themselves, then raise a documented hue-and-cry and shoot them down. But surely it is because we should be so familiar with such methods by now that it is so staggering to watch Bonn tumbling into the same pit time and time again.

To be sure, there are cases with tracks so carefully covered up that they cannot really be identified without the data of the Communist-held archives. No such defence can be argued however in the case of Krüger. It was common knowledge that this lawyer from Pomerania had not only been a member of the N.S.D.A.P. from 1933 onwards but that during the war he had at least on occasion acted as local Party head in the West Prussian District Centre of Konitz (Chojnice). Anyone who has even a glimmering of the systematic brutality which characterised the "Germanisation" of this strip of land, will not need to be told twice that a major Nazi official in such an important centre of the *Weichselgau* can hardly have been blameless. Apparently it never occurred to anyone to view the appointment in this light. Just a week before the Minister was removed, a Secretary of State was assuring inquisitive journalists with astounding aplomb that Krüger had been only a "nominal" member of the Nazi party and that there the matter should rest.

Let me spell it out: the risks that the Federal Republic ran in appointing this character to ministerial rank were glaringly obvious even without the ugly details; but the authorities preferred to shut their eyes. Why? Certainly not out of any diabolical desire to cherish and foster old Nazis. The reasons are far simpler and at the same time far more upsetting. We have become quite simply used to the fact that among Germans of the older generation there are few, far too few, who were not at some time, in one way or another, tarred with the Nazi brush. Not only "resistance fighters" were in short supply under Hitler but also ordinary citizens with clear heads and a bit of backbone. And nowhere is the shortage more striking than among the Germans of the "frontier areas" and the *Auslandsdeutsche* of Hitler's day, the "refugees" of to-day. It is precisely among them that the percentage of those who not only cheered Hitler on his way, but were active in helping him and his henchmen, is so depressingly high. No one wants to exclude these ex-Nazis from all part in present-day politics. Were such radical principles to be applied, a good half of all Germans of over forty years of age would have to be curtailed in the exercise of their civic rights. But generosity can go too

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far. Is German democracy really unable to recruit the twenty or so cabinet ministers it needs, without having to go looking for ex-Nazi functionaries? If so, this is a shocking admission of poverty.

THE TRUTH, however, lies elsewhere. The fact is that it is now considered not quite the thing to ask Germans of any prominence what they were doing in the days of the Third Reich. As the vast majority of middle-aged Germans either have a bad conscience or could easily think of reasons for having one, the problem is simply shelved by pretending that it does not exist—until the next time our noses are unceremoniously rubbed in it. And even then no one asks how the unpleasantness might have been avoided but a general wail goes up about the wicked Communists who ought to have had the decency to produce their compromising material a bit sooner. But why should democracy's enemies bother their heads to spare democracy further embarrassment when the democrats themselves seem bent on foundering in a welter of avoidable gaffes?

The Communists are, as a matter of fact, the last people who should allow themselves the luxury of righteous indignation. For all the "anti-Fascist" posturing of the East-German Republic, some of its top posts are held by old Nazis who were quick enough to accommodate themselves to the red totalitarianism when the brown one was on the way out. And, as the S.E.D. holds their past misdeeds over their heads, they are among Ulbricht's most willing tools; every dictatorial régime has a special affection for people it can blackmail at will. But democracy does not need tools of this sort. What it needs is citizens of some moral fibre, not opportunists who changed the colour of their shirts overnight and who would do so again if the "historical necessity" arose.

F. R. Allemann

John Bull in the German Garden

By P. N. Furbank

ALMOST exactly a hundred years separate Thackeray's arrival in Weimar and Christopher Isherwood's in Berlin. In each case the visit was crucial (at least, I shall argue that it was so in Thackeray's case—it obviously was in Isherwood's), and in each case the author later looked back on the young man who visited Germany and disliked him.

Thackeray went to Germany in 1830, on leaving Cambridge, and soon gravitated to Weimar, where wealthy young Englishmen were in much demand. He was a great success; he visited and drew Goethe (Goethe admired such young English Barbarians as much as he disliked German Philistines); he frequented dinners, balls and assemblies, and had several love-affairs. As he describes it in *Vanity Fair*, under the name of "Pumpernickel," Weimar itself is a charming nonsense-world:

> The Constitution is or was a moderate despotism, tempered by a Chamber that might or might not be elected. I never certainly could hear of its sitting in my time at Pumpernickel. The Prime Minister had lodgings in a second floor; and the Foreign Secretary occupied the comfortable lodgings over Zwieback's Conditorey. The army consisted of a magnificent band that also did duty on the stage, where it was quite pleasant to see the worthy fellows marching in Turkish dresses with rouge on and wooden scimitars, or as Roman warriors with ophicleides and trombones. . . .

On the other hand he came to judge severely the supremely complacent young barbarian he was when he wintered there. "There is about a young Englishman of twenty a degree of easy self-confidence, hardly possessed even by a Frenchman," he writes in the "Kalbsbraten" (*i.e.* Weimar) episode in *Fitz-Boodle's Confessions*.

> The bragging of the Frenchman is not so conceited or intolerable as that calm, silent, contemptuous conceit of us young Britons, who think our superiority so well established that it is really not worth arguing upon. . . . Now when I went abroad I fancied myself one of the finest fellows under the sun. I patronised a banker's dinners as if I did him honour in eating them; I took my place before grave professors and celebrated men, and talked vapid nonsense to them in infamous French, laughing heartily in return at their own manner of pronouncing that language. I set down as a point beyond question that their customs were inferior to our own, and would not in the least scruple, in a calm way, to let my opinion be known. What an agreeable young fellow I must have been!

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Thackeray seems to hint that Pumpernickel is the key to *Vanity Fair*. It was in Pumpernickel that the supposed narrator of the novel first set eyes on the Sedleys and Major Dobbin, and it was at the dinner-table of Tapeworm, the British chargé d'affaires in Pumpernickel, that he first heard the history of Becky Sharp. I suspect what this means is that the original *donnée* of the novel was a remembered glimpse of his own countrymen in Weimar (the English being never so much themselves as on their travels) and that his purpose in writing it was to account, by this exhaustive reconstruction of Regency England, for that charming, snobbish, ignorant and useless young man he was when came to Germany.

For Thackeray, Weimar was a vision of impossible order, a museum-piece of ceremonious idleness a hundred years out-of-date and only delightful if you were careful to think of it as a fairy-tale; its effect on him was to make him meditate on his own Englishness. For Isherwood, Berlin in 1929 was a vision of impossible disorder, another Pumpernickel, only this time one of total permissiveness. It was equally remote and fabulous and delightful to him, and its effect was the opposite; it made him feel liberated from his Englishness. It enabled him to turn his back on the anxious, mother-ridden young middle-class Englishman of *All the Conspirators,* to feel his days of introspection were over; he had become a Tolstoyan observer, a "camera eye." Well, of course, the truth wasn't quite like that, and the high spirits of *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* were a picture less of the Berliners than of Isherwood at 24. His own subsequent disowning of the *Mr. Norris* manner was very striking; it is a passage which makes one greatly respect Isherwood—one feels it contains the germ of another novel.

> What repels me now about *Mr. Norris* is its heartlessness. It is a heartless fairy-tale about a real city in which human beings were suffering the miseries of political violence and near-starvation. The "wickedness" of Berlin's night-life was of a most pitiful kind; the kisses and embraces, as always, had price-tags attached to them, but here the prices were drastically reduced in the cut-throat competition of an over-crowded market. . . . As for the "monsters," they were quite ordinary human beings prosaically engaged in getting their living by illegal methods. The only genuine monster was the young foreigner who passed gaily through these scenes of desolation, misinterpreting them to suit his childish fantasy.
>
> Preface to Gerald Hamilton's *Mr. Norris and I* (1956).

There was a third English novelist for whom living in Germany proved crucial—"Elizabeth" of *Elizabeth and Her German Garden* (1898). And of her superlative complacency there were no recantations. The middle-class English gardening cult derives in considerable degree from her, that is to say from a wealthy upper-middle-class Australian who took to it in supreme contempt of her German neighbours. As far as she is concerned, they are all lumps. The German country lady (in Pomerania) is a superior farmer's wife, an expert sausage-and-cheese-maker. The German gardener can't conceive of not planting things in straight lines. The German *Hausfrau* is always polishing things and doesn't like fresh air, she has no sense of humour and doesn't read books, she hangs her windows in brown lace curtains, she enjoys ridiculous and solemn family festivals, she can never be alone. They are all excellent practical people in their way (not the local peasant, though—he is "past belief low and animal"), but as companions to a clever, sensitive English lady? No. And thank Heaven she does not need them.

> If you have to have neighbours at all, it is at least a mercy that there should be only one; for with people dropping in at all hours and wanting to talk to you, how are you to get on with your life, I should like to know, and read your books, dream your dreams to your satisfaction?

She has her garden, her sense of humour and the companionship (in small doses for preference) of those who love her and can share her pleasure in books and tea-roses and snubbing the governess ("in common with most governesses she has a little dark down on the upper lip").

Elizabeth and Her German Garden is a textbook of an unpleasant aspect (the bogus-ascetic one) of the English ideal. It is quite a scorcher in its unabashed bitchiness and arrogance, and indeed one almost begins to admire its Edwardian insolence—not really so different from Saki's in his more deliberately outrageous (for instance anti-Semitic) moods. Not a book one cares to think of as being read abroad, though, or as falling "into the hands of our servants."

It is none the less true that, where there are no special circumstances to cast a golden glow, the English novelists share the common English judgment on the Germans—that there is something incomplete and narrow about them. Whether it is the German *Hausfrau*, or the duel-scarred Prussian officer, or the child-like German professor, or the beer-drinking German peasant, they are felt to be single-minded, literal, narrow. (The accusation of narrowness is thrown back at the English; for

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instance by Heine, who said he might have settled in England, had it not been for the coal-smoke and the Englishmen. He detested the English for their "genuine British narrowness.")

Two interpretations are given of this narrowness: that the Germans have *no* sense of relative values (they are boorish and naïve), or that they have a perverted one (they are Philistines). George Eliot adopted the former version (the latter was a criticism she more often applied to the English). For one with so many intellectual roots in Germany she was surprisingly patronising towards the Germans. She and Lewes began their official cohabitation with a visit to Weimar (no doubt a dowdier Weimar than Thackeray's) followed by one to Berlin. "Germany is no bad place to live in," she comments disagreeably, "and the Germans, to counterbalance their want of taste and politeness, are at least free from the bigotry of exclusiveness of their more refined cousins." A French friend tells her, to her approval, that a German always has *three* gloves—*i.e.* German politeness is done to annoy you (this begins to be the "Philistine" charge).

> We noticed that during the whole seven months of our stay in Germany, we never heard one witticism, or even one felicitous idea, or expression, from a German.

The Germans, she says in her essay on Heine, lack that "delicate perception, that sensibility to gradation, which is the essence of tact and taste, and the necessary concomitant of wit.... To the typical German... it is indifferent whether his door-lock will catch; whether his teacup be more or less than an inch thick; whether or not his book have every other leaf unstitched...."

The "Philistine" charge begins to be the dominant one with the coming of the "German menace." It is put memorably by the Schlegels' Uncle Ernst in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*: "'Do you imply that we Germans are stupid, Uncle Ernst?' exclaimed a haughty and magnificent nephew. Uncle Ernst replied, 'To my mind. You use the intellect, but you no longer care about it. That I call stupidity.'" It is of course part of the strategy of the novel that Margaret and Helen, with all the hope for England that symbolically rests on their choices, should be German at one remove. They are inheritors of the "true" Germany, the pre-Bismarck one.

> Their father had belonged to a type that was more prominent in Germany fifty years ago than now. He was not the aggressive German, so dear to the English journalist, nor the domestic German, so dear to the English wit. If one classified him at all it would be as the countryman of Hegel and Kant, as the idealist, inclined to be dreamy, whose Imperialism was the Imperialism of the air. Not that his life had been inactive. He had fought like blazes against Denmark, Austria, France. But he had fought without visualising the results of victory.... Peace came—it was all very immense, one had turned into an Empire—but he knew that some quality had vanished for which not all Alsace-Lorraine could compensate him.

KIPLING, WHO WAS a Philistine himself (perhaps the finest talent ever to have been one), took a detached and sympathetic view of the Germans. He incarnates them in his Hans Breitmann, with all the comic implications of that name

1833

THE ENGLISH *come mainly from the Germans, whom the Romans found hard to conquer in two hundred and ten years... a people about whom, in the old empire, the rumour ran, there was never any that meddled with them that repented it not.*

TACITUS *says of the Germans, "powerful only in sudden efforts, they are impatient of toil and labour." This highly destined race, if it had not somewhere added the chamber of patience to its brain, would not have built London.*

THE RULING PASSION *of Englishmen, in these days, is a terror of humbug. In the same proportion they value honesty, stoutness, adherence to your own. They hate the French, as frivolous; they hate the Irish, as aimless; they hate the Germans, as professors.*

I INQUIRED *if he [Wordsworth] had read Carlyle's critical articles and translations. He said he thought him sometimes insane. He proceeded to abuse Goethe's Wilhelm Meister heartily. It was full of all manner of fornication. It was like the crossing of flies in the air. He had never gone further than the first part; so disgusted was he that he threw the book across the room. I deprecated this wrath, and said what I could for the better parts of the book; and he courteously promised to look at it again.*

ENGLAND IS *the best of actual nations. It is no ideal framework, it is an old pile built in different ages, with repairs, additions, and makeshifts; but you see the poor best you have got. London is the epitome of our times, and the Rome of to-day. Broad-footed, broad-bottomed Teutons, they stand in solid phalanx four-square to the points of compass.*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
English Traits (1833)

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(taken from Charles Leland's crapulous Pennsylvanian German, who had the famous party); none the less he makes him a sort of Carlylean hero of "the day's work," a fat, prosaic, beer-swilling, single-minded German naturalist whom no danger or fatigue can put off. He will sweat half-way round the world in search of a single orchid. Breitmann tells the significant little story of *Reingelder and the German Flag*, first published in 1891. The "German Flag" is a rare coral-snake, which Breitmann's friend Reingelder is determined to find. ("By Gott, I will get a Sherman Flag snake or I will die.") The two friends walk the length of Uruguay in quest of it, and eventually a native woman brings them one. Both she and Breitmann warn Reingelder it may be poisonous, but he has read otherwise, and squeezes it; it bites him, and he dies in agony, exclaiming "I am a dead man; and Yates he haf lied in brint." It is interesting to see this story being misinterpreted according to current English prejudice. *The Edinburgh Review* called the story "a delightful study of the stolid egotism of the middle-class German *savant*, with his assumption that every one is ignorant beside himself." Whereas, of course, the story, apart from the allegorical warning hinted at in the title, is as much pro-German as anti-German. Reingelder does not put his faith in his own opinion, he puts it in "Yates," a British scientist. It always weakened Englishmen's judgment of the Germans that they could not swallow the superiority of German educational standards.

Kipling was very popular in Germany, and the Kaiser sent a message to Mrs. Kipling when the novelist fell dangerously ill in New York in 1899. "God grant that he may be spared to you," he cabled, "and to all who are thankful to him for the soul-stirring way in which he has sung about the deeds of our great common race." Kipling did not reciprocate this talk of a "great common race." For him the "Teuton" meant the German; and in his growing hatred of the Asquith government he worried about the figure England was cutting in German eyes. ("How the Teuton must despise us—and how justly!" he wrote the day war was declared.) But he kept a good deal of detachment towards the Germans. For all its atrocity, even the story *Mary Postgate* is not really anti-German in conception. It tells how a repressed English lady-companion, in revenge for the death of the one person she loved (he was her employer's young nephew, and has been killed in a flying accident) exultantly lets a wounded German airman die helpless before her eyes. It is an appalling story, but not because of what Kipling sets out to do—*i.e.* to think himself into the process by which public hysteria, working on private repression, can engender sadism—but because, for all the extraordinary technical mastery of the story, his feelings weren't sufficiently under control for such an experiment.

D. H. Lawrence's were when in 1913 he wrote *The Prussian Officer*, in some ways a rather similar experiment; and with his freedom from external loyalties (even the title, with its national reference, was not his) he was able to go very far in the story. He certainly meant it as an observation on Prussian militarism; there had been a partial parallel to it in the "Zabern affair" which shook the German government in 1913. But it was also a comment on militarism in general. As soon as the officer has kicked and beaten his orderly, no one else exists for them; they are locked, like England and Germany, in a love-affair of hatred. Further, as so often with Lawrence, he leaves the judgment on the brutality itself ambiguous. In the other German army story published with it, *The Thorn in the Flesh*, a similar case of brutality actually has a "happy" consequence.

It was reserved for Wyndham Lewis, another author free, at least by intention, from external loyalties, to treat Anglo-German differences as a battle between two Philistinisms. In *Tarr* he staged the battle on neutral ground, among the art-circles of pre-war Paris (the novel was written in 1914, though not published till the end of the war). For Tarr himself, the English artist-hero, Germanness and Englishness are almost equally the enemy of art—though Germanness is given the fuller treatment. The "artistic" life of the German coteries represents for Tarr/Lewis the perfect symbol of all that is anti-art; Tarr falls in love with the "classic absurdity" of their "bourgeois-Bohemian" interiors (green silk cushions, purple metal and leatherwork, brass jars from Normandy, the Mona Lisa, a plaster head of Beethoven). He analyses the leadership cult and barrack loyalties of their salons:

> Her room, dress and manner were a kind of chart to the way to admire Fräulein Liepmann. The different points in her *Geist* one was to gush about, the various scattered hints one was to let fall about her naturally rather tragic life-story, the particular way one was to regard her playing of the piano.
>
> . . . in this group of women one and all must be in love with each other . . . and where their leader was concerned worship was added to love.

And beside these "bourgeois-Bohemians," who incarnate Philistinism in its purest form, he places the figure of Otto Kreisler, who represents it more indirectly and frighteningly. Kreisler is an artist who, incapable of handling

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any artistic medium, attempts to experience the rigours and self-discipline of the creative life in love-affairs.

> When the events in his life became unwieldy or overwhelming, he converted them into love; as he might otherwise have done, had he possessed a specialised talent, into some art or other. He was a sculptor—a German sculptor of a mock-realistic and degenerate school—in the strange sweethearting of the "free-life."

According to Lewis' scheme, he is bound to fail. For the one thing which has no bearing on art at all, and is distinctively and exclusively human, is death, and Kreisler pursues death. He finally kills himself in the same punctilious, self-disciplinary, Prussian-officer manner as that in which he forced himself on women.

Against these two German brands of Philistinism, the "bourgeois-Bohemian" and the nihilistic, Lewis sets Lowndes the Englishman, who is safely armoured against art by his eternal English humour. He is the descendant of an intellectual aristocracy; and all that Oxford has ever taught him (he has learned it well) is to laugh at things. Tarr, who lives on very tolerable terms with German Philistinism, is quite baffled by this English kind; his darts bounce harmless off its invulnerable surface.

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS three talented English novelists have made excursions into German history; indeed if you put their novels together they neatly cover the last hundred years. There are certain advantages in studying German history in this manner, since a novelist, as opposed to a historian, is likely to make his point of reference clear—*i.e.*, the centre of *non*-German feeling (if he is not a German) from which he is writing.

In the case of Sybille Bedford, in *A Legacy* (Collins, 1956), the point of reference is the "international set," and the centre of feeling is nostalgia for 19th-century moneyed leisure—a nostalgia which, oddly, almost any European reader, regardless of his background, tends to find himself echoing. The main structure of the narrative is provided by the defeat, in the later 19th century, of the traditionally-minded, Catholic, South German landed aristocracy at the hands of the industrial and militarist North. The Franco-Prussian war takes the von Feldens, a Baden baronial family, by surprise. They find that they are part of Germany, when if anything they would rather have been part of France. They discover that children now have to have qualifications and careers instead of just doing what they happen to be good at. One son (Johannes) is bundled off to a Prussian-style military academy. His first encounter with the ritual brutality there nearly deprives him of his reason. He runs away, but political pressure is brought on his father to send him back, and the shock turns him into a speechless imbecile. Strings are pulled, and he is given a lieutenancy in the army, with an orderly to act as his keeper.

His brothers are apparently more successful in coming to terms with the new Germany. Julius marries a Berlin-Jewish heiress; Gustavus uses his wife's family connections to secure a high ministerial post. But Julius has really made no more concessions to the new society than Johannes. He is ready to exploit the Merzes, his parents-in-law, and they are ready to be exploited, but neither makes the faintest effort to understand the other. In fact, they are rather alike. For if the Merzes have lost touch with their intellectual traditions (they are the descendants of those rich Berlin Jews whose salons were Goethe's first audience outside Weimar) they have almost equally lost touch with their financial ones. They have become, not Philistines, but Barbarians, like the von Feldens—hardly conscious of where their money is coming from, and hardly noticing the price they are paying for their expensive son-in-law. Moreover, Julius' grand "unworldliness" is really a fraud. He is rock-hard, "wrapped in untouchable delicacy." He perhaps didn't know (and certainly didn't care) what consternation it would cause to the Prussian railway officials when he arrived in Berlin with a carriageful of pet monkeys. But he did know that his wedding-gift to the elder Merzes was a fake. On this, as on every occasion, he gave them nothing. And, if Julius is a fraud, so is Gustavus, his temperamental opposite, who nurses worldly and "bourgeois" ambitions. If Julius is invincibly indifferent to any but Felden values, Gustavus has betrayed these—he prudently suppressed a letter which might have saved Johannes. Thus general, if not particular, justice is being done, when poor Johannes' commission, and the whole Felden family history, are blown up by the Socialist press into the "Felden affair"—a national crisis, ending in a permanent shift of power away from the Catholic south.

Why we find Sybille Bedford so seductive, I should add, though, is that it is an elegy not just for the innocence of the *piccolo mondo antico*, but for nature itself. In her scheme of things money and nature are the same. The extraordinary abundance of period detail she provides stands for the abundance of nature, the Eden of the purse. The heart of the novel is that Miltonic catalogue of the food at Julius and Sarah's fiftieth birthday party: "Strasbourg terrines large as band-boxes, hot-house asparagus thick as pillars, fifty plover's eggs in a nest of bronze twigs . . . Supremes and Fondants,

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Velours and Clairs, Masques and Glazes, en Bellevue, en Chartreuse, en Savarin, en Bouquetière. . . ."

In Richard Hughes' *The Fox in the Attic* (Chatto & Windus, Penguin) the first volume of what is to be a longer novel the point of reference is unequivocal; it is the country-bred, upper-class young Englishman, a Shelleyan radical, extremely ignorant, extremely insular, extremely idealistic, who visits the *Schloss* of his Bavarian cousins in 1923, and is all impatience to see the "new Germany," with its "broad-minded, peace-loving spirit and its advanced ideas and Art," whilst a different new Germany is organising its abortive *Putsch* under his nose. His cousins' house is a nest of Nazis or Nazi sympathisers. Otto, the dedicated Christian soldier and war-hero, meditates on the absolute necessity of another war: "he believed that for every man war is the essential means of Grace." His brother Walther, the owner of the *Schloss*, is a middle-aged Siegfried, who benevolently bullies his children into the Teuton virtues of toughness and discipline. Walther's son Franz is a Nazi party-member; and there is a Nazi comrade of his in the attic, in hiding after the Rathenau assassination. Augustine hasn't a notion of what is going on (just as he kindly puts it down to a "blind spot" in his friend Dr. Reinhold that the latter actually admires the baroque, and cannot seriously believe that his sweetheart Mitzi can be so "medieval" as to think of entering a convent). ". . . the whole set-up here is just a left-over from the past," he writes home patronisingly. "They are even R.C.s still, here!"

Augustine begins by falling in love with Germany, while still in the train: there is a charming old peasant couple in his compartment, there are "pretty pastel-coloured villages with pantile roofs" outside the window. He begins to be baffled by it when his host's children cannot comprehend that he has saved them from a beating purely from a sporting motive. They are sure he must *want* something. (In *A Legacy*, when Julius' second wife, who is English, is told how Johannes was sent back to military school, her comment is, "How monstrously unfair." "*Unfair*—what a curious term," replies her informant, a zealous Catholic lady to whom this English lay ethic is completely strange.) Augustine finally panics and turns against Germany as irrationally as he has fallen in love with it.

> *These Germans* . . . all this passion for politics, as if any human "collective" was something that really existed! *These trees* . . . all those millions of sinister man-grown evergreen trees. . . .
> *Christ I want to get out!*

All this part of the novel works extremely well. Unfortunately the young Englishman also seems to have been allowed a hand in the narration of the Hitler-Ludendorff *Putsch*. The general drift of these pages, though they are historically scrupulous and psychologically painstaking, is to make a very English joke of Hitler, a schoolboy or school-story one—the phrasing betrays it: the Nazi youth with their "danders up" or "parting brass rags"; Hitler "legging it" after the failure of the *coup*. Dear silly old English humour raises its head defensively.

It is for want of a point of reference or truly-felt centre of feeling that Gabriel Fielding's *The Birthday King* (Hutchinson, 1962), which deals with Germany in the years of Hitler's war, is not quite so valuable for our purposes as evidence. All the right elements are there, in a beautifully-contrived concatenation: a Jewish-Catholic family of industrialists in unholy alliance with the old landed nobility; middle-class Hitlerite officialdom working out its Faustian doom; a young party-parasite on the make politically and sexually, etc. The story is a tragedy of endless minor acts of bad faith, by people who are sure they know how to "use" the Nazis. But there is a trace of bad faith (to art) in the novel itself. You find what you expect to find, made intensely concrete and plausible (as if the concreteness of fiction were something for an author to "use," like rhetoric). It is the Germany of the newspapers, given fictional "flesh."

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Aimez-vous Goethe?

An Enquiry into English Attitudes of Non-liking towards German Literature—By D. J. ENRIGHT

"*Naturellement*, you think I have in mind your ferocious discipline, and *que vous enchaînez votre art dans un système de règles inexorables et néo-classiques*, forcing it to move in these iron bands —if not with grace, yet with boldness and *esprit*. But if it is that that I mean, I mean at the same time more than that when I speak of your *qualité d'Allemand*; I mean—how shall I put it?—a certain four-squareness, rhythmical heaviness, immobility, *grossièreté*, which are old-German—*en effet, entre nous*, one finds them in Bach too. Will you take offence at my criticism? *Non, j'en suis sûr*—you are too great. Your themes—they consist almost throughout of even note values, minims, crotchets, quavers; true enough, they are syncopated and tied but for all that they remain clumsy and unwieldy, often with a hammering, machine-like effect. *C'est 'boche' dans un degré fascinant.* Don't think I am finding fault, it is simply *énormément caractéristique*, and in the series of concerts of international music which I am arranging, this note is quite indispensable. . . ."

(FITELBERG, *the impresario*, DOCTOR FAUSTUS)

NOT ALL ENGLISH non-likers of German literature non-like it for all of the reasons about to be cited, of course. Nor should it be assumed that these various reasons are all equally reasonable or unreasonable. They are all real reasons in that they exist, at least.

1. Since the essence of scholarship lies in its exhaustiveness, its refusal to leave anything unsaid, no matter how obvious it might seem to the layman, we must commence with the following proposal: many English people do not like literature of any sort, not even English literature. Further, among those who like English literature—indeed, among those who must like English literature a lot, since they make their living out of it—there are many who don't like foreign literature of any sort: on the grounds that it is foreign to them, they are innocents abroad, they might be horribly hoodwinked by a false rhythm or a corrupt metaphor.[1]

2. Research indicates that the commonest or most commonly-voiced English objection to German literature has it that this literature is wordy, philosophical, humourless, highly abstract, and crammed with details. In brief, heavy-handed. The objection comes equally from those who have read some German literature and from those who haven't read any because they know it is wordy, highly abstract, crammed with details, etc. Largely it derives from atavistic memories of Goethe and a nervous perusal of the opening pages of *Buddenbrooks*. If this is not altogether an idle prejudice, it is (especially as regards the two writers referred to) an unfortunate one. The German mind appears to be naturally more ruminative than the English—and more pedagogic. We like our novelists to arrive; the Germans are content to watch their novelists travelling hopefully, slowly, and instructively. Thus all the landscape gardening in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (*Elective Affinities*)—though it must be granted that this particular item might carry the implication that human relationships cannot be as neatly planned as an estate. (A piece of symbolism too gross by far for our sensitive British stomachs.) Thus all the discursuses and excursuses of *Faust*, or of Thomas Mann's novels. (The greatest European novelist of the 20th century? Thomas Mann, alas!) Thus *Wilhelm Meister*, that cultural hitch-hiker, of which work Goethe is reported to have said, "I should think a rich manifold life, brought close to our eyes, would be enough without any express tendency, which, after all, is only for the intellect." (But then, Goethe was an old fox by anybody's standards,

[1] For the opposite or "libertarian" point of view see my "Reflections on Foreign Literature," *Addictions*, p. 12f.

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and often contrived to eat his cake and moralise over it.) How one longs to edit Mann's *Doctor Faustus* and *The Magic Mountain*, to render them digestible to our dainty and civilised appetites! (And yet how much of them would we dare—or even want—to throw out when we came to it, when we had actually read the books with the care required of an editor?)

The English reader of novels tends to have a high opinion of himself (fair enough, he *reads*!): he reckons he can do without the trimmings, the writer can leave a whole lot to his imagination: he has grown up into a 60,000-words man. It has been said that the distinctively German contribution to the Novel is the *Bildungsroman*,[2] detailed, digressive, with no clearly defined terms of reference, and a long time in the building. *Doctor Faustus* was described by its English translator (a translator whose like, whatever complaints we might make of her work, we may well not see again) as a "cathedral of a book"—an apt metaphor, if we allow that a cathedral can house the Devil as well. (A lot of little dogs have lifted their legs against *this* cathedral, too.) The British reader prefers a neat and tidy chapel of a book.

3. The charge of humourlessness calls for inspection. "What the German thinks exquisitely ludicrous, is to a Frenchman, or an Englishman, generally of mediocre mirthfulness," wrote G. H. Lewes in 1855.

> Wit requires delicate handling; the Germans generally touch it with gloved hands. Sarcasm is with them too often a sabre not a rapier, hacking the victims where a thrust would suffice.

True, humour with the Germans tends to run to extremes, either boorish slapstick or else high rarefaction. As with the Japanese, a whole middle range of comedy seems inaccessible to them. This is indeed a sad deficiency, both in literature—if only Rilke could have laughed at himself, if only one of Rilke's ladies could have laughed at him!—and also in life, many of whose frictions are most tactfully palliated by the lubricant of an easy, natural, middle-register sort of humour.

What is also sad is that the English reader, missing the sort of sense of humour to which he is accustomed and which he traditionally prizes, assumes the absence of humour of any species. Mann's stateliness, the deliberation and meticulousness with which he builds up his world, seem only pomposity to us, a laboriousness which we quickly characterise as "Teutonic."[3] (*Il est bête—oui, si l'on veut, mais comme l'Himalaya.*) Having made up our minds on this point with characteristic firmness, then, despite our characteristic sense of humour, we fail to sense Mann's own characteristic brand of humour, an irony too complex to attempt to analyse here, the very presence of Mann himself in his work. (Or we assume Dr. Thomas Mann's presence in Dr. Serenus Zeitblom, a sheep in sheep's clothing, and grow peevish when at last we are forced to admit that the two doctors don't quite agree.) We fancy we have taken *Doctor Faustus* by storm, we have simply failed to note that (in Professor Erich Heller's words),

> *Doctor Faustus* is . . . its own critique, and that in the most thorough-going manner imaginable. There is no critical thought which the book does not think *about itself*.[4]

4. Arising out of the previous point: it would seem that in German fiction the author tends to be rather obtrusive; he orders the material around in parade-ground fashion, he deafens us with his stentorian comments on his characters and incidents. Eckermann reports Goethe as having said:

> Germans are strange people. By their profound thoughts and ideas, which they look for everywhere and which they insert into everything, they burden their lives more than is proper. . . .

Yet this remark ought to alert us to something in Goethe at any rate—whom *primus inter pares* we think of as inserting profundities into everything and making the reader's life a burden to him—which doesn't quite chime with our conception of him. That he is "Godlike" we know, but there is also something oddly Mephistophelean about his interventions in his own work. Alas, we expect our rebels, our outsiders, to proclaim their dispositions unequivocally, whether by dissipation and despair, drugs and divorce, or syntactical eccentricities and misuse of commas. When Goethe misbehaves we don't notice it: we just can't believe that he isn't continuously Godlike, sublime, prudent, foursquare and a bore. Our notion of German litera-

[2] Which makes the Germans the inventors of what we now call the "anti-hero," perhaps.

[3] Hans Magnus Enzensberger's essay, "In Search of the Lost Language" (ENCOUNTER, September, 1963), seeks to define the English use of the word "Teutonic": "The wealth of associations attached to this word is considerable. They range from the primeval forest to the study of Dr. Faustus, from bearskins to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Castles and fortresses are Teutonic, but so are abstract terminologies. Wagner's operas and long complex sentences are Teutonic. Leather shorts, bull necks, and exaggerated studiousness are Teutonic. The Teutons are boring, have sweaty feet, and moreover are most unfairly 'daemonic'. . . ." This definition is far from complete.

[4] *The Ironic German* (1958).

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ture is certainly not baseless, but it is based on a set of lowest common factors.

5. The German novelist does not scruple to be "symbolic" in a way that strikes us as grossly naïve and naïvely gross.[5] An associated complaint will be that German writers are heavily aphoristic, self-appointed sages of some small provincial Weimar or other, each having an eye to the school textbook market. The English reader resents and distrusts this habit: a moral tendency should be implicit, not explicit, enacted, not announced: never trust the artist, trust the tale—and alas the artist seems to be everywhere in the tale! To make matters worse, in some of the authors more celebrated though still unread, the aphorisms appear to contradict one another and thus to cancel out. It is infuriating to have to complain, for example of *Faust*, that the work is at the same time insistently symbolic and not symbolic enough, that the poor reader is forever being got at and finally is left in the lurch. For all the heaviness and earnestness of German writers, some of them permit themselves an elusiveness and an irony which arouse grave misgivings in us. We expect the monumental to stand still. There is a real difficulty here for English readers, whether of Goethe, of Thomas Mann, or of Günter Grass, and unhappily no easy solution proposes itself: the only proof of these large puddings is in the eating, and sampling won't work, you may have to eat the whole thing.

6. Another aspect of this difficulty is the frequent mingling in German literature of fantasy and realism, of the elephantine tread and the faery footstep. German scholars seem more addicted to categorisation than their British colleagues—yet German writers are readier to mix categories, less embarrassed by the allegorical, than are we, with our stronger sense of humour (or more nervous one) and our greater sophistication (or more potent philistinism). Similarly disconcerting is the element of piety, reverence—*"Seid nur fromm . . ."*—seen most obviously (blatantly?) in the "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul," which comprise Book VI of the otherwise morally ambiguous *Wilhelm Meister*, and seen in the disquisition on funeral monuments in the rather scandalous context of *Elective Affinities*, in the poet of the *Roman Elegies* tapping out hexameters on the naked back of his Roman mistress, pervasively and despite his irony, in Mann's references to great men and great works—and perhaps, for all I

[5] *Cf.* the verdict of *The New Yorker* in 1947, on the English translation of Elias Canetti's *Die Blendung* (*Auto-da-fé*): "Overstuffed, highly complex novel, rigid with symbolism in the best German tradition. . . ."

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can tell, in Canetti's dealings with classical Chinese culture in *Auto-da-fé*. This *Frömmigkeit*, especially in association with *Gemütlichkeit*, can strike the English reader as hypocrisy (*Frömmelei* in German, incidentally), as in some contexts the very nastiest brand of sentimentality—like the commandant of a concentration camp having solemn thoughts about the sunset.[6]

The German novel has been less securely removed from poetry than the English novel. H. M. Waidson sums up *Elective Affinities* as "a novel by a great poet; it contains questioning and acceptance, defiance and resignation, sophistication and innocence, irony and reverence." For a novel, we may be inclined to feel, it contains far too much. But our great poets don't usually write novels. Günter Grass on his present showing could conceivably be an English poet, but hardly an English novelist (unless perhaps a painter writing a novel). Canetti couldn't possibly be an English novelist. Kafka couldn't even be an Englishman.

Again, there is no simple test of failure or success, legitimacy or otherwise, no portable touchstone. As we know, the adjective "poetic," applied to a novel, can as easily be a term of abuse as of praise.

7. Scholarship is not a bed of footnotes, and what could be more painful than to be compelled by scholarly honour to complain of scholars? I allude to the paucity of stimulating criticism or commentary on the part of British Germanists. With a few honourable exceptions, our Germanists are thoroughly academic, I mean uninformative. The standard acceptable in them seems to be well below the minimum level of discourse expected from specialists in English literature (even)—as if the ability to read German literature is already so remarkable that little more is to be asked from those who have gained it. British Germanists appear to have picked up from German *Anglisten* a deep horror of literary experience and a distaste for literary judgment. The situation is exacerbated by a shortage of criticism from the German side. Where are the great German critics? Judge not—is that what *Frömmigkeit* demands?—that ye be not judged. From my own brief experience of working in a German university—it may have been quite unrepresentative—I came to understand that the literary critic was a form of life only surpassed in vulgarity and frivolity by the creative writer. Learning is *Wissenschaft* is science: which means that the only true learning is philology, and perhaps (because it can be refined upon but hardly refuted) literary categorising. Mann didn't have to go far to find his early idea of the writer as criminal—the degenerate who commits unscientific mayhem on sweet innocent words!

8. Granted, a few of our Germanists have written feelingly about their subject, and some have made available to us timely and inexpensive editions of German writers. But the men who have done most for German literature in our time have been chiefly amateurs, chiefly translators. Rilke and Hölderlin were especially fortunate in their translators, one of them an *Anglist*, another a Germanist (but also by some administrative error a poet). C. F. MacIntyre and Louis MacNeice did more for Goethe in England and America than all the Bi-Centennial papers of 1949 put together. True, Goethe's lyrics remain an unsolved problem—the simpler they are, the more difficult to translate—and those translators of *Faust* who are at home with the humorous, sophisticated, Mephistophelean passages will be foxed by the "nobility" of other parts, while those who succeed with the reflective sections—has anyone really succeeded?—may be defeated by the colloquial and mischievous note. Here, as elsewhere, Goethe's diversity of tone is the great stumbling block.

But clearly we cannot blame "translation" in this general matter. It would be base cowardice to impute the relative neglect of Thomas Mann to his translators, and ridiculous to so ascribe the absolute neglect of Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. And among recent efforts—I mention only those which have reached me even in far-flung Singapore, where some twenty languages and dialects are spoken, but not German—we have Grass, Uwe Johnson's *Speculations about Jakob*, Hans Hellmut Kirst's *Officer Factory* (a German *Catch-22* which gets bogged down in pious thoughts about the Good German Soldier), Goethe's *Italian Journey* in a version by W. H. Auden and Elizabeth Mayer, the poetry and plays of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and (particularly the poetry) of Brecht, and the bi-lingual anthology, *Modern German Poetry 1910–1960*, edited by Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton.[7]

9. We are forced to take cognisance of another distasteful possibility: that in some cases non-admiration of German literature arises out of—or *is*—non-admiration of Germans. The factors operative in this latter phenomenon do not re-

[6] I now read in H. M. Enzensberger (*op. cit.*): "The SS-officer who carried Hölderlin in his knapsack and the concentration-camp commandant who played Schubert sonatas *'nach Feierabend'* (when 'off duty') were by no means legends; these were the consequences of a 'life of the mind,' for which *Bildung* has always been a fig leaf to cover betrayal to those in power. . . ."

[7] ". . . two poets who are also excellent linguists, two poets who know German—can they be found again in this part of the world?" (Enzensberger).

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quire to be aired. In the 19th century things were very different. German literature was eminently respectable, French wasn't.[8] Goethe's first biographer (or almost first) was an Englishman, and the consort of George Eliot. No doubt the associations evoked by the phrase "French novel" still vary from circle to circle, but they will always be potent: the phrase "German novel" draws forth either a groan or nothing.

An extra factor is often at work in our reading of a foreign literature. We tend to keep an eye open for racial characteristics; we read, if we are unfavourably disposed towards the country of origin, censoriously. We do not think of Quilp or Mr. B. as typical Englishmen—but in reading foreign novels we incline to attribute the villain to the race, and more readily than we attribute the hero. In a similar spirit we read our own literature "historically," that is tolerantly—witches are being burned, but it all happened long ago, and times have changed—whereas we admit the historical element into our consideration of a foreign literature only for damnatory purposes. "A certain gay and noisy type of life is needed to make monkeys, parrots, and coloured people tolerable around us," we read in *Elective Affinities* (H. M. Waidson's translation, *Kindred by Choice*). Monkeys, parrots, and coloured people! Shades of the *Herrenvolk* indeed!

But in fact the speaker—a schoolmaster as reported in Ottilie's diary—is merely proposing, fairly harmlessly, that forms of life cannot with impunity be torn from their natural context, that a zoo is disquieting because it is not nature. And Ottilie supplies the corollary: "No one can walk unpunished among palm-trees, and one's opinions must surely change in a country where elephants and tigers are at home." Ah yes, the Englishman running to seed under a tropical sun! Ottilie continues:

> Only the scientific investigator of nature is worthy of respect, the man who is able to describe and depict what is most strange and exotic in its own element, its locality and its surroundings. How glad I should be if I could only once hear Humboldt relating his findings!

Well said, young (1808) lady!

10. Finally it might be noted, in extenuation of our English unresponsiveness in this matter, that a number of Germans have failed to admire German literature, or have admired it temperately. Even Herr Enzensberger admits that "there is no denying that German literature has very often gone a long way to meet the stupidity, presumption, and arrogance of its British critics"—if this sounds a shade discourteous, remember what the man said: *"Im Deutschen lügt man, wenn man höflich ist"*—and though he speaks severely of "the limits of Anglo-Saxon taste," Herr Enzensberger doesn't himself seem to care much for German poetry written before 1950.[9] Thomas Mann remarked in *The Genesis of a Novel*, apropos of his ignorance of *Der grüne Heinrich*, that "my youth had been shaped far more by European literature, Russian, French, Scandinavian, and English, rather than German." And Professor Roy Pascal (*The German Novel*) tells us that "even for Germans, to read the great German novels is mostly a 'cultural task'—infinitely rewarding, I believe, but never likely to become a dangerous passion in the reader. . . ."

[8] With reservations, *e.g.*, Matthew Arnold on Edmond Scherer ("A French Critic on Goethe"): ". . . his point of view is in many respects that of an Englishman. We mean that he has the same instinctive sense rebelling against what is verbose, ponderous, roundabout, inane—in one word, *niais* or silly—in German literature, just as a plain Englishman has. . . ."

[9] ". . . Rilke, Stefan George, and von Hofmannsthal (all of whom have a place in the *bürgerliche* literary pantheon though not among the German moderns). . . ."

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CONCLUSION: *"Interdum vulgus rectum videt, est ubi peccat."* It would appear from our investigation, then, that the English are right not to like certain parts of German literature and wrong not to like other parts. Further than that it would be unsafe to go. In its carefulness, impartiality, fearlessness, and self-effacement, this conclusion might seem a modest exemplification of true scholarship, and *énormément caractéristique* of *Wissenschaft*, perhaps.

On the Rim of the Volcano

Heidegger, Bloch, Adorno — *By* GEORGE LICHTHEIM

THE EXHAUSTION of a national tradition does not make an ideal subject for a review-article ostensibly devoted to the theme of Western Germany's intellectual standing. On the face of it there is no lack of energy and enterprise. Controversies abound. The traditional themes are steadily pursued, and in addition the post-war surge of self-criticism has made for a healthy readiness to welcome foreign imports. To all appearances the Federal Republic is as cosmopolitan as Weimar ever was, though the cultural melting-pot of Berlin has shrunk to the dimension of an enclave in hostile territory. Modernism has finally triumphed in the arts (though not in the lowbrow domain of film, where mediocrity reigns supreme). The twenties have been canonised. Bertolt Brecht plays to full houses. Arnold Schönberg and Franz Kafka have become classics. Philosophy is dominated by the various existentialist schools, sociology by the current fashionable concern over mass production and the alienation of the individual. So far as the availability of modish intellectual products goes, the cultural consumer in the *Bundesrepublik* is no worse off than his opposite number in Paris, London, or Manhattan.

It is when one views the scene in the light of the country's past that all this effervescence appears insubstantial, an attempt to conjure up the mood of an age when the volcano was still active, and when Germany itself was more than the Clapham Junction of the West. The intellectual revolution which ran its course between 1910 and 1930 coincided with the closing phase of Germany's political hegemony in Continental Europe. There was already something fraudulent about certain manifestations of German intellectualism during the Weimar period—one need only consider the vogue of Oswald Spengler—but even the frauds and the false prophets had their importance in the context of a situation which was soon to give birth to the monstrous apparition of the Third Reich. To-day no one expects the Federal Republic—or even a unified Germany, should it ever come about—to set the tone for the remainder of Europe. There is indeed no lack of talent, but most of it relates to specifically domestic issues. The international resonance is gone. Where it persists—as with Jaspers in philosophy, or with Bultmann and his school in theology—it rests on the work of writers who had already made their mark before the war. In psychology, general medicine, and the natural sciences—at one time a steady source of Nobel Prize laureates—the contrast with the pre-war situation is alarming enough to have induced pessimistic forecasts about the coming need to import scientists, as well as workers, from abroad. The kind of fundamental research in which German scholars used to excel is quite simply not being done in sufficient quantity to keep pace with the needs. No amount of industrial prosperity can conceal the fact that the country is no longer intellectually self-supporting.

WHETHER THIS CHANGE should be lamented, or treated as an aspect of West Germany's integration into a wider European whole, must in part depend on the value one attaches to the old Central European culture of which Germany was the dominant factor. It is worth remembering that this culture included the former Habsburg territories. The German-Jewish-Hungarian-Slav synthesis, which *inter alia* produced Kafka (and Lukács) had already passed its peak in 1918, but the afterglow lasted until Hitler's occupation of Vienna in 1938, and in some respects it was brought to an end only by the Communist take-over in Prague a decade later. These two events completed the destruction of a fabric whose peculiar character was bound up with its supra-nationalism.

The absence to-day of a common language—in both the narrow and the wider sense—between Vienna, Prague, and Budapest (not to mention Warsaw) is a factor in the situation of which thinking Germans are very conscious.

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The intellectual nullity, even within the Soviet orbit, of East Germany, and the sterility of the official culture sponsored there by the most philistine of all satellite régimes, aggravate what is anyhow a novel situation so far as Central Europe is concerned. In this particular context the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 was significant in that it coincided with the decision of Professor Ernst Bloch, doyen of East German Marxists, not to return to Leipzig—where he had anyhow been deprived of his chair—but to remain in West Germany. (He is now teaching at Tübingen, where Hegel once spent five formative years as a student in company with Schelling and Hölderlin.)

Mention of Ernst Bloch at this point is indeed inescapable. Sympathetic critics of his work have pointed out that his thinking is related to the pantheism of the early German Romantic movement.[1] The fact that his intellectual roots are embedded in this particular soil does not perhaps seem very startling to Germans, by now quite used to the spectacle of a Marxist who claims Goethe, Schelling, and Carus among his spiritual ancestors. Was not Goethe's pantheism —itself in part derived from Spinoza—the seedbed of Feuerbach's humanism? This intellectual climate accounts both for Bloch's current vogue, and for the virtual impossibility of translating him. In the latter respect he resembles Martin Heidegger, whose thinking finds an echo in his own recent utterances. The two men are contemporaries. Bloch was born in 1888, a year before the author of *Sein und Zeit*, and his first published work, a study of Thomas Münzer (1921), already displayed some characteristics of his later writings: notably the conjunction of a romanticised Marxism with a style made familiar by the expressionist manifestos of the 'twenties.

THE COMPARISON WITH HEIDEGGER may seem unfair to both men; that it is not wholly unreasonable must be apparent to the reader of Heidegger's recent (1961) two-volume study of Nietzsche. Bloch would presumably acknowledge as his own particular weakness a certain incapacity for sustained logical construction. In other respects the distance between Freiburg and Tübingen may appear less considerable to out-

[1] Bloch's major work, the two-volume treatise titled *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, has since 1959 been available in a West German edition published by Suhrkamp in Frankfurt. Suhrkamp has also issued his *Naturrecht und menschliche Würde* (1961), a bulky essay on the philosophical implications of Natural Law doctrine; and the first instalment of his *Philosophische Grundfragen* (1961). The latter bears the characteristically untranslatable sub-title, *"Zur Ontologie des Noch-Nicht-Seins."*

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siders than to Germans involved in the intellectual and political upheavals of the past three decades. Heidegger's notorious Rectoral Address in 1933 welcoming the onset of the Third Reich had its counterpart in some of Bloch's less fortunate utterances during the Stalin era. It would be wrong to conclude that German philosophers are inherently prone to such aberrations: most of them got through those turbulent decades without saying anything at all. Those who rushed in where lesser men feared to tread were animated by a genuinely romantic belief in the duty of philosophers to give voice to those inchoate stirrings in the souls of their contemporaries which had found a temporary echo in their own minds. It was Heidegger's misfortune that his pronouncements of 1933—clearly intended as a continuation and a counterpart of Fichte's patriotic speeches against Napoleon in 1813—served a cause to which in the end no sane person could subscribe. Bloch's gradual disillusionment with Stalinism has run a similar course, and its roots are likewise to be found in a kind of naïvety about History's way of disclosing its inner purpose. The fact that both men have consistently found it possible, in their published utterances, to dispense with the kind of commonsensible reasoning about public affairs that is elsewhere thought compatible with profundity, may be an index to their failure as political prophets.[2]

PUT THUS BALDLY, the record appears more damaging to foreigners than to Germans aware of the complexity of their history. The basic fact about Germany since the 18th century has been the failure of the Enlightenment to strike root, and the subsequent Romantic revolt against what little rationalist thinking had penetrated into the country from the West. Germans critical of their country's past are conscious of this, but find it difficult to explain the matter to foreigners, the more so since self-criticism may give rise to grotesque misunderstandings abroad. If even Kant—not to mention Hegel—can be seen by outsiders as a purveyor of Teutonic mysticism (there have in recent years been some notorious examples of such an approach), it becomes tempting to treat the whole matter *en famille*. Paradoxically, Marx now benefits from this new mood of domestic self-examination. Since it is felt that foreigners are incapable of understanding him, educated Germans increasingly tend to include him in the national pantheon. This has its dangers, but it has also been beneficial in promoting a good deal of scholarly writing about the Hegelian roots of Marxism. Bloch's own works have their place here, even though his rhapsodical manner is not conducive to clear thinking about the peculiar fate of Marxism in its own homeland. *His* Marx, needless to say, is the author of those pre-1848 writings which have lately swept three continents and even provoked comparisons with Zen Buddhism: the contemporary of Schelling whose name recurs throughout the 1,600 pages of Bloch's *opus magnum*. If one bears in mind that Schelling's divinisation of Nature accords with Goethe, and that Nietzsche (like Feuerbach before him) drew on the same source, one obtains an inkling of what all this means to Germans in whom the Romantic tradition is still alive. I express a purely personal view when I say that Bloch seems to have succeeded—quite contrary to his intention—in re-transmuting this tradition into speculative mysticism. It is in this curious guise, as a latter-day reincarnation of the 17th-century mystic Jakob Böhme, that this learned exegete of Hegel and Marx has made a niche for himself in the soberly bourgeois *Bundesrepublik* of Dr. Erhard.

THE CASE OF HEIDEGGER is not as dissimilar as it may appear to his followers, accustomed as they are to take him at his own valuation. For Heidegger too has a Master, and moreover one whose influence was closely related to the German catastrophe. In recent years it has grown increasingly evident that Nietzsche has come to occupy in Heidegger's mind the place reserved for Hegel and Marx in the thinking of Bloch. The external sign of this is the massive two-volume study already mentioned. Though published only in 1961, most of it was composed between 1936 and 1941, that is to say during a period when Nietzsche—in the words of Karl Jaspers[3]—had been proclaimed the

[2] For Heidegger's checkered career under Hitler, and in particular for his attempt to adapt Nietzsche to contemporary use, see Karl Löwith, *Heidegger—Denker in dürftiger Zeit* (Göttingen, 1960). A rather journalistic essay by the late Paul Hühnerfeld (*In Sachen Heidegger*, Hamburg, 1959) has at any rate the merit of being candid about Heidegger's role in promoting the mental climate which made the capitulation of the German academic world in 1933 such a wholesale and wholehearted affair.

[3] Preface to the second (1946) edition of Jaspers' own *Nietzsche*, the first edition of which appeared in 1936 (and was subsequently banned). A discussion of Jaspers' role as the principal representative of the "internal emigration" of philosophy during the Hitler period cannot be undertaken here. His post-war commitment to a rather traditional and conservative liberalism is perhaps most clearly defined in his Heidelberg lectures published in 1950 under the title *Vernunft und Widervernunft in unserer Zeit*: in the main a critique of Marxism and psychoanalysis along lines already familiar from his pre-war writings.

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official philosopher of the Third Reich. No one familiar with Heidegger's public utterances in those years will think it strange that Nietzsche should have provided the theme of his war-time lectures in Freiburg. Their publication in 1961 was described by the author as an attempt to clarify "the mental road I have traversed from 1930 to the *Letter on Humanism* (1947)." For the benefit of the non-initiated this cryptic statement requires an explanatory note.

In 1929 Heidegger had published his study of Kant[4] which, for all its eccentric treatment of Kant's categories, was still in the tradition of academic philosophy in that it made an attempt to elucidate the meaning of various logical and epistemological concepts. This, however, proved a turning-point. From about 1930 Heidegger seems to have felt that the whole enterprise was a waste of time. In his lectures on Nietzsche, traditional philosophy, and in particular the analysis of experience—*i.e.*, the Kantian problem—is treated with a disdain not inferior to that which Nietzsche himself had displayed when obliged to comment on the scholastic labours of his mental inferiors, who were actually foolish enough to suppose that there was something to be gained by following in the footsteps of pedants like Descartes and Kant. Heidegger has inherited Nietzsche's conviction that the history of philosophy is at an end, and that we are at the beginning of a new aeon: which is something rather different from Jaspers' cautious acceptance of Nietzsche's vitalism as a necessary complement to the Kantian analysis of logical concepts.

The difference is quite simply that between rationalism and irrationalism, for the latter implies a commitment that goes far beyond the recognition of a supersensible dimension closed to ordinary discursive thinking. It is also the difference between the acceptance of poetry as a legitimate function of the human mind, and the attempt to build a world-view upon the kind of vaticination Nietzsche undertook in his *Zarathustra*, and which Heidegger, in his learned commentary on his predecessor, treats with the same deadly seriousness that he has elsewhere bestowed upon the visions of Hegel's and Schelling's unfortunate poet-friend Hölderlin. One can scarcely ignore the—surely not fortuitous—circumstance that Jaspers (like Thomas Mann, whose attitude to Nietzsche closely resembled his own) was appalled by the Third Reich, whereas Heidegger welcomed it as the fulfilment of Germany's national destiny (which indeed in an unintended sense it proved to be). The famous Rectoral Address with which Heidegger in 1933 assumed the "leadership" of

[4] *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik.*

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Freiburg University would not be the important document it is, were it not so patent an application of the "existential" thinking worked out in *Sein und Zeit*. The terms of this eminently political discourse—existence and resolution, acceptance of one's fate, willingness to serve one's people, "total revolution of Germany's existence" (*eine völlige Umwälzung des deutschen Daseins*)—were derived from the categories of Heidegger's previous "existential analysis." They did not just "happen to fit" the current political jargon: they *were* this jargon!

IT MAY SEEM PURPOSELESS to harp on this painful theme, but the point needs to be made for the sake of clearing up the confusion which still surrounds the mention of Nietzsche outside Germany. It *is* possible to take a critical and non-obscurantist view of Nietzsche, as has been shown by Jaspers (and by Nietzsche's most recent editor, Karl Schlechta, thanks to whom there now exists an edition of the *Works* purged of the deliberate falsifications introduced by Nietzsche's sister). It is likewise possible to follow in Nietzsche's footsteps, so far as this can be done by someone who is not himself a seer. This is what Heidegger has been doing, and while it would be foolish to treat this theme as an occasion for moral censure, it is just as well to be clear about the fact that the most influential German philosopher of our time—Heidegger is unique in the fascination he exercises upon the wider public, as witness even minor details such as his ability to fill the largest lecture hall—is wholly committed to the tradition of radical irrationalism.

However, the joke here is on Heidegger. Readers of *Sein und Zeit* in 1927 had their attention drawn to a hitherto neglected author, Count Paul Yorck von Wartenburg, whose correspondence with Wilhelm Dilthey was posthumously published in 1923. In paying tribute to Yorck—*et pour cause*, for this learned amateur turned out to be a far more original thinker than his celebrated friend—Heidegger obliquely put Dilthey in his place; and since the latter had dominated the study of *Geistesgeschichte* for many years, this was a way of depreciating the academic world in general. In championing the brilliant outsider, Heidegger was likewise able to turn some of Yorck's ideas about history to good account (which is not to say that he merely adapted them). In 1927 this amounted to a minor sensation within the larger excitement stirred by Heidegger's assault on traditional post-Kantian philosophy.

By now the wheel has come full circle: Heidegger has long been the great panjandrum of German academic philosophy, but now it is he whose throne is insecure. In 1956 Yorck's literary remains appeared in print[5] and it became possible to gain a clearer picture of this profound though unsystematic writer who in his own fashion had thought his way through to a new understanding of the Greeks. The least one can say is that the comparison does not flatter Heidegger. The fragment published by Yorck's editor from a manuscript completed before 1897 displays an intellectual power which Heidegger has not approached since *Sein und Zeit*, and which, to judge from his *Nietzsche*, has been absent from his thinking since the mid-thirties. In the end it may turn out that what he has lacked all these years is simply a new mental stimulus comparable to the one he received when in 1923 he chanced upon the Dilthey-Yorck correspondence. On the evidence of the two ponderous and extremely repetitive volumes he has devoted to Nietzsche, no fresh source of inspiration has taken the place of the earlier one: perhaps not surprising when one considers that by the 1920s Spengler had already served up a form of Nietzscheanism for the middle-brow public. Heidegger's disdain for Spengler as a kind of poor man's Nietzsche is unmistakable; that he has himself for years been busy pumping up water from the same well would perhaps be denied only by the most fervent of his admirers.

THE POINT IS relevant for an understanding of Heidegger's place in modern German philosophy: a subject to which it is necessary to recur, for all the distaste which his followers predictably evince when their attention is drawn to his obsessive brooding over the unique significance of the historical moment. Heidegger's celebrated political misadventure in 1933 would be a mere curiosity had it not been related to his cast of thought. In fact it sprang from his concern with the contemporary European situation, which he interpreted in a quasi-Spenglerian manner. At the same time he activated a principle of historical interpretation already made manifest in Hegel's thinking, and increasingly influential throughout the 19th century among German writers brought up in the Hegelian tradition. On this point one may cite Karl Löwith's critical essay on Heidegger, which has already been mentioned:

> The immediate starting-point of Heidegger's anticipatory and retrospective thinking is ... the experience of the present moment. It is the decadent character of our epoch which orients his essentially historical thinking towards the future, and at the same time motivates it as a process of

[5] Graf Paul Yorck von Wartenburg, *Bewusstseinsstellung und Geschichte* (ed. Iring Fetscher, Tübingen, 1956).

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regression and retreat from the pinnacle of European metaphysics [attained] in Hegel.

In principle, however, Hegel's constructive progressive ascent, and Heidegger's destructive regressive descent are not dissimilar. Both have their being within the same modern aberration of an intellectual and ontological historicism, whereby the absolute of the Spirit, or of Being, is made historical.

The contemporary of Napoleon conceived his completion of European philosophy as the fulfilment of a primary undeveloped origin; the contemporary of Hitler conceives the identical history of the European spirit as the gradual epiphany of nihilism.

The unflattering implication that Heidegger stands in approximately the same relation to Hegel in which Hitler stood to Napoleon is naturally resented by Heidegger's followers, the more so since it suggests disquieting thoughts about Germany's past and present role in Europe.

Reflective Germans are now very ready to concede that nationalism has had its day, and that the defeat of 1945 sounded the death-knell of ambitions which antedated the Third Reich. Beyond this point the mental picture becomes a little blurred. It is temptingly easy to dwell on France's rather similar discomfiture in 1815. The point stressed by Löwith—but not grasped by all his readers—is that Heidegger is a figure of the European decadence, whereas Hegel represented the summit of Europe's intellectual achievement. The turning-point—for Löwith and those who share his fundamentally conservative interpretation—is marked by the 1840s, when Marx and Kierkegaard, proceeding from different standpoints, reacted almost simultaneously against Hegel, and against what Löwith rather quaintly describes as the "bourgeois-Christian world," *i.e.*, the culture of the European middle class which in the following generation found its last expression in the work of Jakob Burckhardt. Readers of Löwith's *Von Hegel zu Nietzsche* (1941), and of the writings he has published since returning from New York to Heidelberg in 1952, may on occasion be tempted to wonder whether this learned critic of "historicism" has not been infected by the spiritual malady he diagnoses in others. However that may be, his trenchant critique of Heidegger places him on the "left" within the current German spectrum, even though his own politics are hardly more radical than those of an old-fashioned liberal like Jaspers. What is implied for educated Germans who are *not* professional philosophers by the thought that the 1945 catastrophe terminated both Germany's national history and the culture associated with the names of Goethe and Hegel, may be gauged from that eminently philosophical novel,

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Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*. Mann, like Jaspers, grew up in a culture that hailed Nietzsche as a liberator from bourgeois stuffiness. Unlike Jaspers, he came round in the end to a firm, though reluctant, awareness that the roots of the German disaster are traceable to attitudes which a more light-hearted age had judged in merely æsthetic terms. That the "Faustian age" has come to a terrible end (at any rate for the Germans) is a conviction shared by all these writers.

FOR GENUINE RADICALISM—which in West Germany to-day means "revisionist" Marxism—one has only to make the brief train journey from Heidelberg to Frankfurt: now once more the locale of the famous *Institut für Sozialforschung* which during the Hitler period emigrated first to Paris and later to New York. Some of its better-known founders, notably Karl Wittfogel, have settled in the United States, but the Institute reorganised itself in the 1950s under the direction of Max Horkheimer and, what is perhaps more important, it has over the past decade provided a focus for the activities of its most celebrated and controversial figure, Theodor W. Adorno: philosopher, sociologist, musical historian, literary critic, and in all these various capacities the principal gadfly of the West German Establishment, though himself a pillar of academical learning.[6] (Cf. in particular his *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie*, 1956: a scholarly dissection of Husserl's phenomenology).

Adorno—like Herbert Marcuse, who has remained in the United States—represents an aspect of the Weimar period's intellectual life which has also found a confused echo in the writings of Bloch: the synthesis of a Hegelianised Marxism with the kind of *Kulturkritik* that was formerly carried on under the liberal-individualist banner. Concern over the fate of the individual in an increasingly organised and centralised society is a theme which recurs in Adorno's writings, though living as he does in a Western environment, his targets tend to be the manipulators of our new "affluent" society, rather than the political functionaries who perform a similar role in the East. This attitude lends a defensive tone to his work, perhaps inevitable in a thinker who regards the transition from the old liberal to the new planned and "managerial" order as potentially a change for the worse, at any rate so far as culture is concerned. What Marcuse (another pessimistic Marxist) calls the "one-dimensional" character of modern existence—that is, the absence of philosophical thinking that transcends the *status quo*—is also Adorno's chief worry. "Nothing remains of ideology," he says plaintively, "but the recognition of that which is—a model of a behaviour which submits to the overwhelming power of the established state of affairs." (Cf. *Ideologie*, ed. K. Lenk; Neuwied, 1961, p. 262.)

There are moments when this uncompromising radical sounds almost like a traditionalist. In fact he is continuing a line of thought which during the Weimar period had already been initiated by another "unofficial" Marxist writer, the literary critic Walter Benjamin. Instead of celebrating the *juste milieu* of the Weimar Republic, these writers diagnosed it as an interval between two catastrophes induced by the secular decay of liberalism. At the same time—and this sets them off both from the conservatives and from Leninists like Lukács—their attitude to the "modern movement" was one of critical support, in so far as it reflected an attempt to get beyond the petrified structures of late 19th-century bourgeois civilisation. The resulting complexities are echoed in an occasionally somewhat mannered and esoteric language which plainly is not that of East European cultural populism. In the idiom favoured by Soviet critics (even of the less uncivilised sort) Adorno—though plainly a Marxist—must be held guilty of "aristocratic contempt for the people."

It would be tempting to confront Adorno at length with Georg Lukács.[7] Fortunately it is possible to resist the temptation, without for that reason abandoning the subject, for Adorno has undertaken his own confrontation, in a brief but devastating essay on Lukács (in vol. II of his

[6] A list of Adorno's publications would be lengthy, though unlike Lukács, with whom he has feuded for years, he does not suffer from lack of concision. His *Aspekte der Hegelschen Philosophie* (1957) cannot be recommended to beginners, and the same must be said of his *Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie*, a series of lectures on the theory and practice of contemporary music. (Cf. also his *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, 1949).

Noten zur Literatur, two volumes of critical essays published in 1958–61, make fewer demands on the reader, but are virtually untranslatable, and the same applies to the 1955 essay collection, *Prismen: Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft*, which rings the changes on a number of themes familiar to Western readers, but does so in a radicalised Hegelian or neo-Marxist terminology. For Adorno's (and Horkheimer's) post-war attempt to re-fashion Marxism into an instrument of philosophical criticism of society, see their joint *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (Amsterdam, 1947).

[7] Lukács' long-delayed treatise on æsthetics has now finally seen the light: *Aesthetik Teil I: Die Eigenart des Aesthetischen* (two vols., pp. 851 and 887; *Luchterhand*, 1963)

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Noten zur Literatur). If the two men—so alike in some ways, so sharply divided in others, and not only by geography—are to be compared, perhaps the matter is best summed up by saying that Adorno's work represents the kind of sophisticated critique of contemporary society which Lukács *might* have performed, had he not abandoned analysis for apologetics. No doubt Lukács—at one time linked to the original Frankfurt group—sees his activities in a different light. The fact remains that to a former associate like Adorno he appears to have committed intellectual suicide. Sentimentalists who may doubt the literal accuracy of this remark are referred to Adorno's own statements on the subject, which lose nothing of their polemical edge for being highly polished and couched in an idiom remote from Communist vituperation. (They may also profit from reading what a genuine critic of art like Adorno has to say about Lukács' dreary platitudes on the subject of "formalism.")

THESE POLEMICAL EXCHANGES on the intellectual Left are necessarily conducted over the heads of the East German cultural functionaries. Since the death of Brecht, and the enforced emigration of Ernst Bloch and Hans Mayer, East Germany has become a spiritual dust-bowl in which only the naïvest of foreign visitors still manage to find sustenance.

It is a minor paradox among many others that Marxism has remained alive, and even experienced something like a spiritual rejuvenation, in Western Germany, while dying out in the Eastern half of the country. That this is not a necessary consequence of living under a Communist dictatorship is evident from the case of Poland. Why the East German régime has failed so completely in holding the loyalty of that part of the Left-wing intelligentsia which after 1945 was willing to give it a chance is a question that cannot be gone into here, though it may be suggested that the subsequent *débâcle* was already foreshadowed during the Weimar years, when the Communist Party tried without success to acclimatise Leninism on German soil. The experiment proved disastrous politically and—Lukács' obstinate assertions to the contrary—it has turned out to be no less of a catastrophe in the intellectual domain. This must be the short answer to those well-meaning people outside Germany who believe that, with a little liberalisation, the régime founded by Ulbricht may yet strike root. The chance—if it ever existed—was missed some time between 1945 and 1949, since when every passing year has contributed to the gradual barbarisation of what, with all its faults, was once a European country.

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Living with the Past

What German Historians Are Saying — By F. L. Carsten

German academic historians have always exercised a strong political influence. But perhaps at no other time did they have so urgent and vital a task in coming to grips with the past as they had after the catastrophe of 1945. Many well-known historians had given way to Nazi pressure and blandishments and had lent their services to the Third Reich and to racial interpretations of history. Even the venerable *Historische Zeitschrift* (under a new editor) opened its pages to the results of pseudo-scientific "research into the Jewish question" and kowtowed to the infamous *Gauleiter* Julius Streicher, whom it hailed as "a personality engaged in the making of history." Furthermore, the leading historians after 1945 felt the need to link the rise and fall of the Third Reich with the past, to explain to their countrymen how it was possible for Hitler to seize power, that no resistance was rendered to him at the decisive hour, and that all later attempts at opposition—culminating in Count Stauffenberg's attempt on Hitler's life—had failed. A small book published after the collapse of 1945 by the Nestor of German historians, Friedrich Meinecke, bears the title *Die deutsche Katastrophe* and firmly traces the main currents of German history from the foundation of Bismarck's Empire to the rise and fall of Hitler.[1] These reflections carried the more weight because the author had been in close touch with conservative opposition circles and had resigned as editor of the *Historische Zeitschrift* rather than make concessions to the Nazis.

Since then the work of probing into the past, of analysing the causes of the disintegration of the Weimar Republic, of describing the methods used by the Nazis to defeat their opponents, to gain and retain power, to rule Germany and the occupied countries, has been carried on by many younger historians. It should be said at the outset that, in their work, no holds are barred; no attempts are made to hush up or to minimise the terrible events of the years 1933–45, to deny that the roots of Nazism must be sought in German history, or to deny the responsibility of those who helped Hitler into power. There have, of course, been numerous attempts at "white-washing," but they have emanated from the persons involved, *e.g.*, ex-Chancellor von Papen, or prominent Generals and Admirals; they have found no support among serious historians. There has also been a fringe literature of memoirs and pseudo-scholarly works by former right-wing extremists —such as Hans Grimm or Helmut Sündermann —which are neo-Nazi, anti-British, and violently nationalist. But I know of no single academic historian who defends these views, and frequently their upholders have had to rely on British or American writers—usually equally obscure—to support their theses. In Germany itself the echo has been feeble.

The detailed research into the history of the Third Reich has, above all, been carried out by a group of young historians at the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich and has been published in the Institute's excellent quarterly, the *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (now in its twelfth year), and in a series of accompanying monographs. Particularly valuable is the source material printed in this journal: documents on Himmler and the Gestapo, the attitude of the Army, the opposition to the Nazis, the Nazi system of justice, etc. Monographs on certain aspects of Nazism and related subjects are also being published by various Institutes of Political Science which have grown up in recent years at several German universities. Two books of fundamental importance have appeared in the series coming from the Berlin Institute: a very detailed study of the dissolution of the Weimar Republic by Professor K. D. Bracher, and an even more detailed analysis of the Nazi seizure of power in 1933–34 by Bracher and two other historians.[2] Both contain a wealth of detail indispensable for an understanding of what happened in Germany in the years 1930 to 1934. Neither is easy to read—they can perhaps be criticised for scholarly excess and lack of literary form—but they are bound to have a lasting influence on the younger generation.

In an essay on "The Technique of the

[1] *Die deutsche Katastrophe* (Wiesbaden, 1946). *The German Catastrophe* (Beacon Press, 1963).

[2] Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart and Düsseldorf, 1955). Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Sauer and Gerhard Schulz, *Die nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung* (Cologne and Opladen, 1960).

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National Socialist Seizure of Power," which has just been published in English,[3] Bracher summarises the contents of these two bulky volumes. He stresses that "it had been Hitler's tactics to find support from industry, the army, and the big landowners." He attributes responsibility to the "many senior civil servants" who in 1933 "comforted themselves with the thought that the revolution, inevitable in any case, was proceeding with such splendid legality," and who "did more than their duty to ensure its success in their own administrative sphere." He further emphasises that, through the purge of June 1934, "the alliance of interest with the army could be consolidated into the main fountion of his [Hitler's] power." The Army's "condonement of mass murder made it the accomplice of the Nazi rulers." Equally striking is the statement, in the same volume, by Dr. Krausnick (the director of the Munich Institute of Contemporary History) that

> the rabid nationalism of wide sections of the German middle class . . . created an atmosphere in which a sense for the most elementary moral concepts and principles of political order had atrophied amongst a majority of the German people. This majority welcomed or tolerated the concentration of all power in Hitler's hands and the subjugation of state and society to himself.

These are far-reaching admissions, especially for German historians. On such a basis no conceivable apologia can be made for the circles which helped Hitler into power and maintained him there.

If Nazism—and in particular the measures against the Jews—would to-day find no defender among the serious historians in Germany, there is another question which Western observers have ceaselessly put: did the Germans know about this persecution, or can they plead ignorance because the "final solution" was carried out secretly and in occupied Poland? At least one well-known historian, Professor Ernst (of Heidelberg), recently answered this question honestly and clearly:

> How many Germans knew about the Concentration Camps? This is a question which is not easy to answer. That Jews were persecuted, as were politicians of the left, and that this persecution assumed inhuman forms, everybody knew, at least since 1938. Whoever denies this lies. But the large majority could not know the extent of these things. . . . On the whole, one could not have any serious illusions even before 1933 about Hitler's attitude towards the Jews.

[3] *The Road to Dictatorship—Germany 1918–1933* (London, Oswald Wolff, 1964), with ten essays by different German historians.

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These sentences do not come from an academic treatise, but from a series of lectures given to students of all faculties and now published as a paperback.[4]

The treatment of the Poles was only one better than that of the Jews, and in both instances Hitler could base his policy on a long-standing enmity between the Germans and their neighbours—a hostility which has been revived in the case of Poland by the events after 1945 and the loss of Germany's eastern provinces. In spite of this there are the beginnings of a new approach on the part of the German historians. In an article first published in the official weekly *Das Parlament* and later issued as a pamphlet, Professor Percy Schramm (of Göttingen), a leading German historian, emphatically states that "the fate of the Poles as a nation was harder than that of any other important nation in Europe," that their conduct in the face of adversity is worthy of the greatest admiration, and that the policy adopted during the Nazi occupation of Poland was

> a mixture of cussedness, overweening pride, stupidity, and above all criminal amorality; in the eyes of the Poles it was a time of terror, worse than anything they had experienced under the Russians.[5]

On the German occupation of Poland itself, the Munich Institute has published a monograph by Martin Broszat which provides an entirely unvarnished picture and makes no attempt to play down or excuse the atrocities committed. It does not follow other German writers in absolving the Army from all responsibility for what happened in Poland, but states unequivocally that "the endeavour to keep the Army away from the 'blemishes' of the policy practised by the S.S. and the Nazi Party towards the Jews and the Poles only served to smooth the path of that policy." For Hitler soon sensed that no serious opposition would come from the Army Command.[6] In conclusion Broszat observes that the anti-Polish policy of the Nazis not only destroyed itself but, equally, the historical and legal basis of the German position in the East: an opinion that will hardly endear him to the vocal German refugee organisations. A recent monograph on the Warsaw rising of 1944, based on Polish as well as German sources, similarly describes in detail the terrible atrocities committed against the insurgent Poles by the S.S. and other special units.[7] These are welcome signs of an understanding of Polish history and Polish suffering, which may help to bring about better relations between two countries that have been enemies for so long.

WHILE MUCH interesting and important work has appeared on the last three decades of German history, the same cannot be said of work on the previous century. The history of the Hohenzollern monarchy, of the unification of Germany, and of the German Empire of 1871 has been neglected by the younger historians. What there is in this field comes mainly from historians of the older generation and is, in my view, rather uncritical and apologetic. It was often written to refute any connections between this period and that of the Nazis. This applies especially to the first volume of Professor Gerhard Ritter's "Statecraft and the Profession of Arms—the Problem of 'Militarism' in Germany," which covers the period 1740–1890 and amounts to a vindication of Prussian traditions.[8] By his own definition of "militarism"—political decisions primarily arrived at through technical military considerations and not by taking into account what is rational and morally justified from the point of view of state and nation—Ritter achieves the remarkable feat of classifying as "militarists" Louis XIV, Charles XII, and Peter the Great, and denying this epithet to the Prussian kings of the 18th century. To him Napoleon was the "arch-militarist," and a new militarism was brought into Europe through the French Revolution. What he does not consider is the fact that in Prussia the Army dominated the state and the population, that the Officer Corps became the first estate, and that its interests (identical with those of the nobility) prevailed to a larger extent than in any other European country.[9]

If any such tendencies had ever existed in France they were destroyed by the French Revolution, as they were in Sweden in the early

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[4] Fritz Ernst, *Die Deutschen und ihre jüngste Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1963).

[5] Percy Ernst Schramm, *Polen in der Geschichte Europas* (Bonn, 1961).

[6] Martin Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik, 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1961. Compare the same author's *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Munich, 1963).

[7] Hanns von Krannhals, *Der Warschauer Aufstand, 1944* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1962). See my review article on the Warsaw Rising in *Survey* (London, July 1963).

[8] Gerhard Ritter, *Staatskunst und Kriegshandwerk—Das Problem des "Militarismus" in Deutschland*, Vol. I: *Die altpreussische Tradition* (Munich, 1954). His views are summarised in *Das Problem des Militarismus in Deutschland* (Bonn, 1954).

[9] These points have been well brought out in a recent monograph by Otto Büsch, *Militärsystem und Sozialleben im alten Preussen, 1713–1807* (Berlin, 1962).

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18th century by the disaster of Charles XII. But in Prussia they persisted into the late 19th century, and were given a new lease of life by the great military successes of the years 1864–71. Another conservative historian, Walter Görlitz, also champions Prussian traditions and institutions in his books on the Prussian Junkers and the General Staff, and in biographies of Field-Marshal von Hindenburg and other military leaders. As Bismarck's Empire marked Germany's summit of power, these views are bound to find supporters in a divided Germany which has experienced a steep decline in its power.

How tenaciously such opinions are held by certain historians became evident when Professor Fritz Fischer (of Hamburg University) published a bulky and learned volume on the war aims of Imperial Germany in World War I.[10] It has long been known that at different times during 1914–18 the German government, the military leaders, the industrialists (and other "interested" groups), the political parties, all advocated the annexation of wide areas in East and West as well as a large extension of the German colonial empire—aspirations that found their strongest expression in the peace of Brest-Litovsk. Fischer, however, shows—on the basis of long and detailed research in many archives—that there were only differences of degree between the war aims of these different groups, that the civilians were as eager for annexations and power as the military, that the German war aims remained basically the same throughout the war, and that Germany was aiming at "world power."

THIS THESIS immediately provoked angry conservative outbursts. Although Fischer in his preface stated that the war aims of the other belligerent powers should be similarly investigated—a task which he could not undertake as the British and French archives are still closed for this period—he was severely criticised for saying next to nothing about the policies of Germany's enemies, for finding activity and aggressiveness only on the German side, for neglecting the many peace-feelers emanating from Germany during the war. These reproaches led Professor Hölzle, one of the attackers, to the categorical demand that an end should be made to the writing of 20th-century history on the basis of German sources alone, while others were still inaccessible. In his opinion Fischer

[10] Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht—Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914–18* (Düsseldorf, 1961).

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adhered to the popular German tendency of self-accusation (*"die beliebte Selbstbeschuldigung"*) and failed to show fairness to his own country.[11]

Professor Ritter went much further. In an attack circulated through a press agency he chided Fischer because he used the expression "the Germans" instead of "us." In his opinion Fischer's book does not show evidence "of a genuine striving for historical understanding, of the interpretation of the sources without bias," but "an absence of objective, genuinely historical intuition which is surprising." This is the schoolmaster taking to task a rather backward pupil, not the colleague disagreeing with another. Evidently Ritter was badly upset by Fischer's tendency to "paint everything black-on-black," which he felt came close to a kind of "political flagellantism."[12] Naturally, Ritter and others are free to differ from Fischer's thesis, but if so, they should refute his arguments in the only way open to serious historians, by proving him wrong, either in detail, or on general grounds. This, Professor Ritter says, would involve writing an extremely dull and even bulkier book: a poor rejoinder. If Fischer has made errors, his critics will have to prove this, but emotional outbursts will not convince anyone. I must add, in all fairness, that a more sober approach has prevailed more recently, if not in the daily press, at least in the learned journals, in long articles by Professors Epstein and Herzfeld (who called Hölzle's attack on Fischer "most unfortunate").[13]

YET IT REMAINS very disturbing to hear that a leading German historian said of Fischer's book: "We had really fixed it all so well, and then this stupid ass must come along and spoil it...." A more cynical remark coming from a scholar can hardly be imagined. Perhaps it is too much to hope that German historians will learn to approach controversial problems without passion and preconceived ideas; yet the attempt is being made. There is much in the work of the younger generation to prove that they are trying hard to discard out-of-date notions and prejudices. It can be safely said that—on grounds of age alone—it is their influence that is likely to prevail.

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[11] Erwin Hölzle, in *Die Welt* (July 7th, 1962).

[12] Gerhard Ritter, in an article in the *Elite-Namendienst*, published by the *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* (Hamburg).

[13] Fritz T. Epstein, in *Jahrbücher für die Geschichte Osteuropas* (Vol. X, 1962); Hans Herzfeld, in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (Vol. XI, 1963).

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Out of Central Europe

Hans Mayer, the Last German Marxist? — By GEORGE STEINER

HANS MAYER'S decision not to return to his chair at Leipzig means that the last humanist of European stature has abandoned East Germany. One by one, the lights have gone out in that grey land.

This is no cause for rejoicing. The reduction of East Germany to brutal parochialism and servility leaves a dangerous gap. The D.D.R. stands, in denial of humane contact, between the vulnerable energies of independent intellectual life in eastern Europe and the efforts of the West to "get through" on a basis of argument and response. Moreover, by virtue of history and language, East Germany is intensely a part of Europe, and the diminution of any such part to barbarism is a threat to the vitality of the whole. In cities in which Goethe wrote and Wagner composed, generations are coming of age in a miasma of lies and controlled hatreds. Already, under the pressure of different truths, of "un-facts" and history re-written, the East German language is developing its own jargon and dialect. This divorce, across the wall of silence or vituperation, has direct bearing on West Germany. On balance, the East Germans have dealt more drastically and honestly with the Nazi past than have the West Germans. But precisely because the truth and summons of conscience have so often come barbed with Ulbricht propaganda, the West Germans have found it easy not to listen. Many a West German, furthermore, has felt that the evils of Nazi rule, and his own share in them, were somehow made good or cancelled by the miseries of his eastern neighbours.

The linguistic and cultural separation between the two Germanies, their isolation from each other, bodes ill for any rational prospect of reunification. The process of insulation of consciousness—of the way in which totalitarian schooling can falsify the entire world image and reflex system of a nation or generation—is one which is grimly characteristic of our time and which we do not yet fully understand. But obviously it makes the resumption of dialogue immensely difficult. The words no longer refer to the same underlying experiences; they may continue to sound alike, but have contrary definitions. A young East German might come to be more at home, in the syntax of his politics and feelings, in Peking or Albania than in Cologne.

This divorcement of East Germany from European life signifies the defeat of a specific historical possibility. Marxism is a reading of history and a utopia of human conduct profoundly rooted in European civilisation. Marx is as much an heir to Vico, Lessing, and Diderot as he is to Hegel. The impulse of rational doctrine and utopian idealism behind the Russian revolution is part of the genius and legacy of European enlightenment. And it is on this common heritage of western liberalism and eastern revolution (a heritage to which Bolshevism pays tribute, often naïvely, in its claim of kinship with 1776 and 1789) that the chances of effective co-existence and intellectual encounter ultimately depend. East Germany represented the possibility of a bridge, of the re-inclusion of the Marxist presence in a flexible, widened compass of European sensibility. Even granted the brutishness and ineptitudes of the Pankow régime, there seemed to be a chance to relate Marxism to its true and primary roots in western European history and culture.

THAT IS WHY Ernst Bloch hung on grimly until 1961. That is why Hans Mayer was persuaded to leave Frankfurt in 1948 and go to Leipzig University. Now they are gone, and the best of their students are silent or in prison. It is in East Germany that the major achievements of European Marxist thought of the past decades are banned. It is here that the alliance between classical humanism and the dialectics of Hegel and Marx—as represented in the works of Lukács, Bloch, Adorno, Walter Benjamin—is regarded as treason.

The literacy of Hans Mayer, the repertoire of awareness and tradition on which his criticism draws, is wide but of a specific historical type. It derives from the tastes and habits of reference of the more progressive elements of the German and Central European bourgeoisie (often Jewish) of the period from 1880 to 1914. It has its markers: a genuine knowledge of Goethe, and the realisation that Goethe is one of the master spirits of life. An uneasy, yet profound

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admiration of Wagner. Intimacy with Heine and Stendhal, with Lessing, Voltaire, and Ibsen. Men of that background tend to use Greek poetry, and particularly Homer, as a tuning-fork of the ideal. They regard Shakespeare as, in some essential way, a European, nearly a continental possession. They read Karl Kraus.

The type is recognisable. It is at home, or at least a familiar guest, in several languages. It has its distinctive note of wide, passionate allusion. But also its solitude. Nazism and the Stalinist terror in East Europe have all but destroyed this particular "Central European Humanism." It survives in exile or uneasy return: in Erich Kahler's library in Princeton, in the book-crammed study of Georg Lukács, high over the river in Budapest. It has its brilliant life when Ernst Bloch is lecturing at Tübingen or Friedrich Torberg is at the Café Raimund in Vienna. It can be found in England: when Canetti is in the room; or at All Souls. A central humanism, classical in background, radical of bias. It gives to the writings of Hans Mayer their essential idiom.

MUCH OF MAYER'S most solid work deals with German literature of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is gathered in two volumes: *Von Lessing bis Thomas Mann* (1959), and *Zur Deutschen Klassik und Romantik* (1963). Being historically compact and salient in its main problems and crises, German literature confronts the critic and literary historian with certain clearly defined challenges. There is scarcely an essay by Hans Mayer which does not have its counterpart in the critical writings of Lukács, Adorno, Thomas Mann, Emil Staiger, or Benno von Wiese. This makes it possible to define Mayer's quality, the tone which he adds to a traditionally established process of critical discussion.

It is against the dominant fact of Goethe that a German critic tests the reach of his sensibility. First published in 1960, the ample preface to Goethe's *Italienische Reise* shows Mayer at his best. Without seeking to break novel ground, he admirably defines the nervous and moral crisis which drove Goethe to leave Weimar, with such covert abruptness, in September, 1786. He deals lucidly with the delicate interaction between Goethe's botanical, morphological studies —his quest for the "primal plant"—and the resurgence of his unifying and inventive powers under the Italian sky. Without ideological rancour, and in an argument which corrects the dogmatism of Franz Mehring, Mayer shows *why* Goethe remained innocent of any specific awareness of the nearing political upheaval. The essay closes with an acute comparison of the

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limitations and insights of Stendhal's *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*. Though written at different times (Stendhal cheerfully plagiarised Goethe), both works mark the transition from a primarily classic to a modern focus. (For closeness and modesty of perception, Mayer's preface compares interestingly with W. H. Auden's.[1] The parallel reminds one of how much Auden is, among Anglo-Saxons, the nearest to "Central European" values and tones.)

In a long essay on Heinrich von Kleist, first published as a monograph in 1962, Mayer argues that the daemonic stress and complications of Kleist's brief, self-destructive career recapitulate the ambiguities and crises of the German urban middle class between the time of Kant and the rise of militant nationalism. I translate "urban middle class" because, significantly, Mayer prefers to use *bürgerlich* rather than *bourgeois*. He is persuasive in his rebuke to Lukács' thesis of an irrationalist Kleist, and illuminating when he affirms that the *Prinz von Homburg* is a precedent to that characteristic nineteenth-century motif, the artist as tragic hero.

The paper on Heine implicitly refutes any facile appropriation of the poet by a Marxist or pre-Marxist pantheon. Mayer underlines the ambivalence of Heine's position, his fastidious recoil before populist forces and ideologies whose triumph he foresaw and, in a certain measure, hoped for. To Mayer, Heine is the great exception, *die Ausnahme,* the Jew freed from a Ghetto he did not know at first-hand but not yet at home in German culture, "the unique instance of a human being entirely without tradition, but also, to start with, nearly without resentment." Mayer notes with admiring reproof how often this unhoused genius made of literary style his sole loyalty, how often he wounded because he himself had learned to move without ties.

Lessing: Mitwelt und Nachwelt is among the best introductions available to this fascinating, deeply attractive, yet so little-read figure. In it, Mayer touches on one of his primary themes: the failure of German culture to take stable root in the rational, sceptical consciousness of eighteenth-century Europe. He shows how alone Lessing stood amid the surge of romantic chauvinism, how little in German literature can be said to derive directly from Lessing's example and achievement. Lessing's ideal of a coherent, reciprocal relation between poet and society was not realised. Out of this failure, says Mayer, sprang the fierce subjectivity, the edgy, often pathological isolation of the German artist.

WHERE, IN ALL THIS, is Mayer's commitment to dialectical materialism and Marxist aesthetics?

There are obvious Marxist tenets in Mayer's historicism, in his placing of the literary work or personage in a context of specific social background and political moment. But if this tactic points to Marx, it points no less to Taine and Sainte-Beuve. Marx's postulate of the involvement of the work of art in the political, social milieu is itself representative of that alliance between history and poetics which colours so much of nineteenth-century thought from Herder to Comte.

A Marxist flavour is also apparent in Mayer's internationalism, in his refusal—beautifully demonstrated in his essay, *Aussenwelt und Innenwelt*—to assign to German literature or German culture an exemplary merit. On the contrary: like Lukács, Mayer sees in German history a crucial failure of responsible communication between artist and society, an inability of the poet to translate inward values into effective social attitudes. Here, indeed, he touches on that most pressing and complex riddle: the recurrent co-existence in German life of political barbarism and high art. But this anti-chauvinism, this capacity to judge "from outside" are not exclusively or primarily Marxist. They belong to what I have tried to describe as a particular "European centrality." The two overlap; they are conjoined in the hatred lavished by Nazism and Stalinism on the "rootless cosmopolitan."

Perhaps the only distinctive Marxist bias in these essays on classic and romantic literature is Mayer's insistence on the implication of the individual writer in the pervasive, historically-determined crisis of the European bourgeoisie.

To see his actual use of Marxist canons, to note the ways in which the pressures and exactions of East German cultural life have shaped his critical discernments, one must look elsewhere—to Mayer's articles on contemporary literature. A representative collection is now available in a paper-back, *Ansichten: Zur Literatur der Zeit*.[2]

This is not an easy book to judge. Writing from the safety of the West, one finds it even difficult to imagine, concretely, the net of dangers and insinuations, of blackmail and soft menace, under which a civilised mind has to work in an East German university. Noting some of Hans Mayer's most dubious arguments (and they have been dealt with incisively by François Bondy in *Der Monat* and by Peter Demetz in the December *Merkur*), one asks oneself: does he *really* believe this, or did he *have*

[1] See "On Translating Goethe," ENCOUNTER, November 1962.

[2] Rowohlt Verlag (Hamburg, 1963).

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to say it in order to continue saying anything at all? Does he really believe, or want us to believe, that Anna Seghers' *Der Ausflug der toten Mädchen* has a finer moral insight, a more valid criticism of life, than Proust, whose work Mayer knows and loves so well? Does he honestly fail to observe the treasons and servilities in the genius of Louis Aragon, or believe that the weakness of Sartre's fiction derives from Sartre's attempt to modify and complicate dialectical materialism with elements of American sociology and post-Freudian psychology? Or take the essay on Durrell. Very possibly, my initial response to the *Quartet*, with which Mayer takes issue, represents an overestimate. But of what rational use is it when Mayer applies to Durrell—as he does to half a dozen figures ranging from Richard Strauss and Hofmannsthal to Karl Kraus—the cliché of "decadence," when he dismisses Durrell's success as a sign of "anachronism, decay, and regression"?

In such a context, queries about intellectual honesty are facile rhetoric. What presumably takes place is a continuous and precarious adjustment of the mind to an unstable equilibrium, a tight-rope act of conscience over an abyss of personal danger. It is, I think, in the essays on Pasternak and Kafka that the virtues and limitations of Mayer's ideological position—the heroisms and concessions of the humane sensibility in a context of totalitarian dogma—can most fairly be seen.

IT MUST HAVE TAKEN real courage to write this poised, calm critique of *Dr. Zhivago*. Mayer observes in Pasternak's "un-hero" a total avoidance of human commitment, an abdication from the claims and realities of history. He is neither, as the more crass of Soviet critics proclaimed, a symbol of reaction and subtle treason, nor, as was sometimes argued in the West, a champion of liberalism and æsthetic freedom. Mayer sees Zhivago as a complex *anachronism*; he is, in both senses of the word, impertinent to the time. In one cardinal point, moreover, Mayer agrees with the official critics who refused to publish the novel in *Novy Mir*. By making Zhivago the alleged author of some of his own most perfect and characteristic poems, Pasternak pulls a sleight of hand; he enforces the claim for Zhivago's stature and depth of perception (a claim which the novel itself does not support), and he all but compels identification between himself and his principal character. Is the proceeding entirely honest? (One of the answers would, of course, be to suggest to Mayer that Pasternak was working under conditions comparable in danger and indirection to those under which Mayer himself was writing.)

Kafka und kein Ende? is a well-known paper which Mayer read in Paris in February, 1960. Surveying the mass of one-sided or polemic studies—Kafka the religious allegorist, Kafka the satirist of decaying imperial bureaucracy, Kafka the existentialist—Mayer calls for an ordering and reassessment of the texts themselves. He says very rightly that too little has yet been done to discriminate the successive psychological and stylistic phases in Kafka's development, and that too little heed has been given to Kafka's own division between fragmentary work and work ready or intended for publication. Above all, Mayer proposes to remove Kafka's achievement from a place of mysterious singularity; he seeks to localise it in the current of the general post-romantic theme of the malaise of the artist in society. He concludes by suggesting two analogues to Kafka's art: Gustav Mahler and Proust. In all three, Mayer discerns a similar apprehension of a society innerly torn and splintered (*die Zerrisenheit einer ganzen Zeit und Gesellschaft*), and a consequent pessimism about the means and validity of art. In each, he notes aspects of the Jewish problem and a strategy of retreat into childhood and dreams.

This grouping seems to me, in certain respects, bizarre. But Mayer is surely right when he seeks to relate Kafka to surrounding literature and formal experiment. It has recently, for example, become clear that *The Castle* may owe more than one of its secrets and devices to an earlier Czech classic, Božena Němcová's *Granny*.

THE GENERAL POINT is clear: by method and tone, Hans Mayer's criticism tries to define a *via media*. It is equally opposed to party dogma and anarchic impressionism. It is Marxist in its trained awareness of historical context, in its refusal to isolate literature from the totality of social fact, and in its general pattern of necessary historical phase and decline. It is humanistic in its respect for the autonomy of æsthetic forms and in its rejection of any facile identification between philosophic and political content and artistic value. In voice and ideological bias, it is very near the earlier criticism of Edmund Wilson.

But not in originality or depth. This is the difficulty. There is a grey, flat reasonableness about a good deal of Mayer's work. As if the constant effort toward mediation and equilibrium between dialectical pressures had blunted the edge of insight.

Mayer's essay on Kleist is lucid; but it lacks the sheer inwardness of Thomas Mann's. Nothing he says of Heine is banal or insensitive, but Adorno's grip on the same theme—the poet not wholly housed in any language—is much more forceful. The essay on Kafka, for all its

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Die deutsche Literatur

TEXTE UND ZEUGNISSE

Mit Helmut de Boor, Rainer Gruenter, Albrecht Schöne, Richard Alewyn, Hans-Egon Hass, Benno von Wiese herausgegeben von Walther Killy

Das Werk wird in sieben Bänden zu je etwa tausend Seiten, die in der wissenschaftlichen Gesinnung denen der de Boor-Newaldschen Literaturgeschichte entsprechen, einen fundierten Überblick über die Geschichte der deutschen Literatur vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne geben. Die umfangreichen Lesebücher vergegenwärtigen durch Auswahl, Anordnung und Erläuterung die wichtigsten Autoren, die bedeutenden Stile und Richtungen, die bedeutenden Stoffe und Formen.
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justice, gives less purchase than the haughty reflections of Walter Muschg in *The Destruction of German Literature*. Walter Benjamin is simply so much deeper on Goethe. Topic for topic (and comparison is inevitable), Erich Heller's is often the more trenchant, the more illuminating reading.

This blurring at the edges, the sense of argument muted, is obviously part of Mayer's survival. That he should have accomplished so much under conditions so abrasive is itself a very high achievement. His style, moreover, has precisely those virtues of scruple and modesty which sometimes diminish the bite of his criticism. It has remained delightfully intact from the sombre jargon which mars so much of present German prose, Marxist or academic.

It will be exciting to see what a mind so fine and wide-ranging will produce now that certain pressures are off.

The Cult of Success

On "the Battle of a Book"—By MICHAEL HAMBURGER

THERE is something a little puzzling about the fuss that has surrounded the publication of Marcel Reich-Ranicki's recent critical book, *Deutsche Literatur in West und Ost*.[1] In both German Republics, of course, literature often receives the kind of publicity reserved in this country for politics, sport, and prominent personalities, with consequences which, even in West Germany, can both make and break the reputations of writers. In West Germany, as in East, the arts are still apt to be regarded as a public institution, if not as a battleground of ideas and powers. Yet excellent critical works on contemporary German literature are published every year without being so much as noticed in the general press—and two whole pages of the popular magazine *Der Spiegel* have been devoted to this one.

It may be that Reich-Ranicki's collection raised expectations that have less to do with literature than with politics. The title of his book promises a full survey of German writing on both sides of the Iron Curtain, or a comparative study that would make some kind of break in the Curtain by tracing confluences and divergences and arriving at some unforeseen conclusion. Yet a glance at the sub-title reveals one important limitation: with a few unhappy exceptions, only prose fiction is dealt with, and it is mainly in drama and poetry that cross-fertilisation has occurred. A further glance at the list of contents shows that even within that limit Reich-Ranicki's scope is far more modest than his title suggests. The main body of the book consists of essays on thirteen West German and six East German writers; five additional sub-sections are taken up by shorter and slighter pieces on writers who, for various circumstantial reasons, are placed in separate categories.

Since Reich-Ranicki's manner and viewpoint must have been familiar from his contributions to widely read periodicals, reviewers had little cause to expect more than what he has provided. Their disappointment seems out of all proportion to the character and quality of the book; and from the very start—Reinhart Baumgart's review in *Der Spiegel*—the dispute to which it gave rise has been conducted in such a way as to involve personal and literary reputations that need never have been called in question.

If any larger issue was at stake in the dispute, it is likely to have been one that is always apt to erupt in German literary discussion; not the Cold War, as one might suppose in this instance, but a conflict between the generations, between a Radical ascendancy and those Father-figures rightly or wrongly identified with the *status quo*. To this perennial conflict the public, too, responds with extraordinary zest and enthusiasm, as I saw at a three-day symposium on "critical approaches to contemporary literature" which I attended last November at the West Berlin Academy of Arts. Some sixty writers and critics—including Reich-Ranicki and Baumgart—lectured and discussed, for twelve hours in all, in front of an audience of more than eight hundred! The participants were poets and novelists; occasional critic and regular reviewers; literary editors of newspapers and magazines; radio and stage producers; theatre, radio, and television critics; a music critic; and a sprinkling of university lecturers. There were visitors from America, Austria, Britain, France, Poland, and Switzerland. One participant prominent in the discussions was Hans Mayer, who had recently come over from East Germany. Here too, and

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at a similar public discussion held in the previous year at the even larger Berlin *Kongresshalle* on "Literature and Politics," one could not help being struck by the keenness and stamina of these large audiences and by the tension set up by any discussion touching on tradition and innovation. At the later symposium a distinguished older critic and translator of poetry was forced to sit down after trying violently to make himself heard amid the hooting and groaning of the audience. Not even political questions aroused such passion.

Deutsche Literatur in West und Ost says little that is new about the relations between West and East German literature. But its implied criteria are not favourable to the more daring innovators among the West German writers. There is no reason why a collection of essays and reviews dealing with representative writers on both sides—or, in a few cases, resident in neither country—should not have been as valuable and interesting a book as a closely argued, and almost inevitably partisan, thesis on the situation of the two literatures; but Reich-Ranicki's range of insight and reference is narrower than his range of subjects. It is also unfortunate that (as Baumgart objects) he has chosen to deal not with those West German writers who can fairly be compared with their East German opposites—writers, that is, who combine a didactic purpose with a spontaneous or calculated appeal to a public—but with those post-war writers who, whatever their non-literary commitments and beliefs, insist that art has its own rules and its own liberties. Despite his scrupulous show of impartiality towards both kinds of writer, Reich-Ranicki's critical vocabulary betrays his lack of sympathy with the latter kind. With a depressing monotony and repetitiveness we are told that the characters of the West German writers are "lone wolves" (*Einzelgänger*) and "outsiders"; the description occurs in the essays on Hans Erich Nossack, Wolfgang Koeppen, Alfred Andersch, Heinrich Böll, and even Ernst Glaeser, who is placed in a different category because of his political past. What is more, Reich-Ranicki commits the blunder of citing a typical piece of East German criticism (p. 464) with polemical intentions; and that piece begins with the stricture that all the characters of a certain East German novelist "are lone wolves (*Einzelgänger*), isolated, do not appear as members of a clearly-defined social community." Other key words of Reich-Ranicki are *"militant" "aggressive," "defensive."* Koeppen's angry novels are "aggressive." There is something "defensive" about the works of Max Frisch. Heinz von Cramer "makes a programme of aggressiveness." The characters of Siegfried Lenz are always "people on the defensive." Günter Grass shows a "satirical aggressiveness." Baumgart's social criticism is at once "aggressive" and tame, and it "suffers from self-complacency." Hermann Kesten (an émigré writer) is an "aggressive philanthropist." Anna Seghers, the East German writer, shows "no aggressiveness" in her novel *Das Siebte Kreuz*; and the East German poet, Stefan Hermlin—"a gourmet of language, a fastidious connoisseur of symbols"—fails to write poems that are "militant."

In a book of nearly five hundred pages Reich-Ranicki never once allows himself to be carried away by anger, "aggressiveness," enthusiasm, or mere wit. So it is hard to know what exactly he wants West or East German writers to do. Reading between the lines one would gather that he wants the West German writers to curb their individualism, fantasy, and "mysticism" (a distinctly pejorative term, with which he damns a number of poets) for society's sake—and the East German writers to defy the Party, for the sake of individualism, etc., or Reich-Ranicki's middlebrow norm of literary good taste and propriety. If the latter, I doubt that they will think it worth the price. All the essays on East German writers trace the same curve of decline

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from native talent to imposed mediocrity or silence. There can be few West German readers who need to have that sad truism rubbed in. As for his West German subjects, praise and censure are so evenly distributed, with so little adjustment to the peculiar style and vision of each writer, that one is left only with a sort of composite author whose "epic talent" is now more, now less "aggressive," whose characters are social misfits and "suffering, introverted types"—the very bogeymen of the Party Line critics.

Baumgart likens Reich-Ranicki to President de Gaulle and to Wagner's Beckmesser: and, for all his conscientiousness, his care over facts, and his almost touching desire to be fair, his judgments become as boringly predictable as his recurrent complaints that this or that writer has been guilty of bad taste or incorrect grammar. There are many sound judgments on specific authors and specific works; but all one can say in favour of this book as a whole is that it conveys a good deal of useful information in a way that is not likely to attract many new readers to its subjects or counteract any prejudices against modern German writing in general. Repetitiveness blunts the total impact. It may be that the so-called *avant-garde* writers have had it all their way too long—and one of them, Mr. Enzensberger once more, has debunked the "cult of novelty" in no uncertain terms—but Reich-Ranicki's book is neither outspoken nor discerning enough to expose a conspiracy of lone wolves. To do so, he would have had to begin by dividing the true innovators from their modish fellow-travellers, and he lacks the equipment for such a task. His best, most carefully documented essays—those on Gerd Gaiser, Anna Seghers, and Arnold Zweig—are concerned with the effects of Nazi or Communist ideology on imaginative writing; and the breakdown of his critical vocabulary in the face of poetry confirms one's impression that his interests are social, moral, and political, rather than æsthetic. Such interests are rare enough in contemporary West German criticism —most of which, if not Marxist, takes its cue from the imaginative writers themselves—to have amply justified a more ambitious and less cautious book.

Herr Reich-Ranicki's very dilemma may be significant. His inclusion of such émigré writers as Remarque, Kesten, and Robert Neumann—rather than Elias Canetti, say, or Erich Fried, or Jakov Lind—seems to suggest that his choice of West German authors was imposed on him by the greater eminence generally accorded to the more experimental writers, from Nossack and Koeppen to Johnson and Günter Grass, and

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not by his true affinities or preferences. His one wistful aside on contemporary English literature —those "by no means deep, decidedly innocuous, but cultivated, charming and humorous, thrilling and intelligent novels, short stories, and plays which the English produce continually and whose quality can be relied on"—gives another indication of where his true affinities lie. The few West German writers who would meet that requirement—and Reich-Ranicki goes on to complain that "they are almost totally lacking in German lands"—may be associated with orthodoxies no more to his liking than the radicalism of the *avant-garde*.

In a retort to Reich-Ranicki's book Heinrich Böll points out that "not twelve years separate 1933 from 1945, but centuries of an interregnum; not twelve years separate 1945 from 1957, but centuries, abysses of diverse contemporaneity...." Reich-Ranicki shows little awareness of the very great difficulties faced, and largely overcome, by the West German post-war writers, and by a few East German writers whose names do not appear in this book; and any serious attempt to deal with the problem of continuity would have called for the inclusion of many other writers, regardless of whether they are alive or dead, talked about or ignored. Helmut Heissenbüttel makes this point in a restrained and highly intelligent review (in *Der Monat*), while conclusively dissociating himself from the conflict between the generations.

Nonetheless, Heissenbüttel's final judgment that *Deutsche Literatur in West und Ost* is a perniciously reactionary book—not because of Reich-Ranicki's failure to understand the situation of the writers criticised, nor because of his hankering after standards which could not possibly be theirs, but because his very choice of subjects is a concession to "the cult of success" —surely overestimates the power of this book to arrest the recovery of German literature. When all the fuss dies down, what will remain is a book with the obvious limitations of occasional criticism, more informative and more painstaking than most of its kind, less elegant and less lively than many. Within its narrow range of perception it is unpretentious enough to do more good than harm.

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AUTHORS

Goronwy Rees devotes two chapters in his autobiographical *A Bundle of Sensations* (Chatto & Windus, 1960)—"Innocent Abroad" and "Victory" —to his experiences in pre-Hitler and post-war Germany....

John Mander was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. His first book was a study of Berlin's history—*The Eagle and the Bear*. He was for a time on the staff of the *New Statesman*, and is at present Assistant Editor of ENCOUNTER. He is the author of two Penguin Specials—*Berlin, Hostage for the West*, and *Great Britain or Little England?*...

Martin Walser was born in 1927 near Lake Constance. After the war he studied philosophy and literature (doctorate thesis on Kafka). His best-known novels are *Ehen in Philippsburg* (1957) and *Halbzeit* (1960). His play, *The Rabbit Race*, was performed last year at the Edinburgh Drama Festival....

Erich Heller was Professor of German at Swansea for many years, and is at present teaching at Northwestern University, Illinois. His best known books are *The Disinherited Mind* (1952) and *The Ironic German* (1958)....

Peter Heyworth *writes of himself:* "Born in New York in 1921 (of British parents). Music critic of *The Observer* since 1955. At Balliol, read P.P.E. and have thwarted interests in that direction, but eventually hope to liberate them in a book about musical life in the Weimar Republic. This month I go to live in Berlin for a year."...

R. W. Leonhardt is at present the literary editor of *Die Zeit* (Hamburg). He taught German for several years at British universities....

P. N. Furbank was born in 1920 near London. After the war, he taught English at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and has published a study of *Samuel Butler* (1948)....

D. J. Enright is the literary critic and poet, now living in Singapore. His publications include: *The Apothecary's Shop* (Secker & Warburg, 1957) and *Addictions* (Poems), Chatto & Windus, 1962....

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F. L. Carsten is the author of *Origins of Prussia* (Oxford, 1954). He teaches at the School of Slavonic Studies, London....

Michael Hamburger first became known through his translations of Hölderlin into English in 1943. He is at present Reader in German at Reading University. His best known publications are: *Weather and Season* (poems, 1963); *Reason and Energy* (essays, 1957); *Modern German Poetry* (an anthology, with Christopher Middleton, 1962)....

Günter Kunert was born in 1929, lives in East Berlin (where he was discovered and encouraged by Bertolt Brecht). His poems have been published in West Germany—*Erinnerung an einen Planeten* (Hanser Verlag, Munich).

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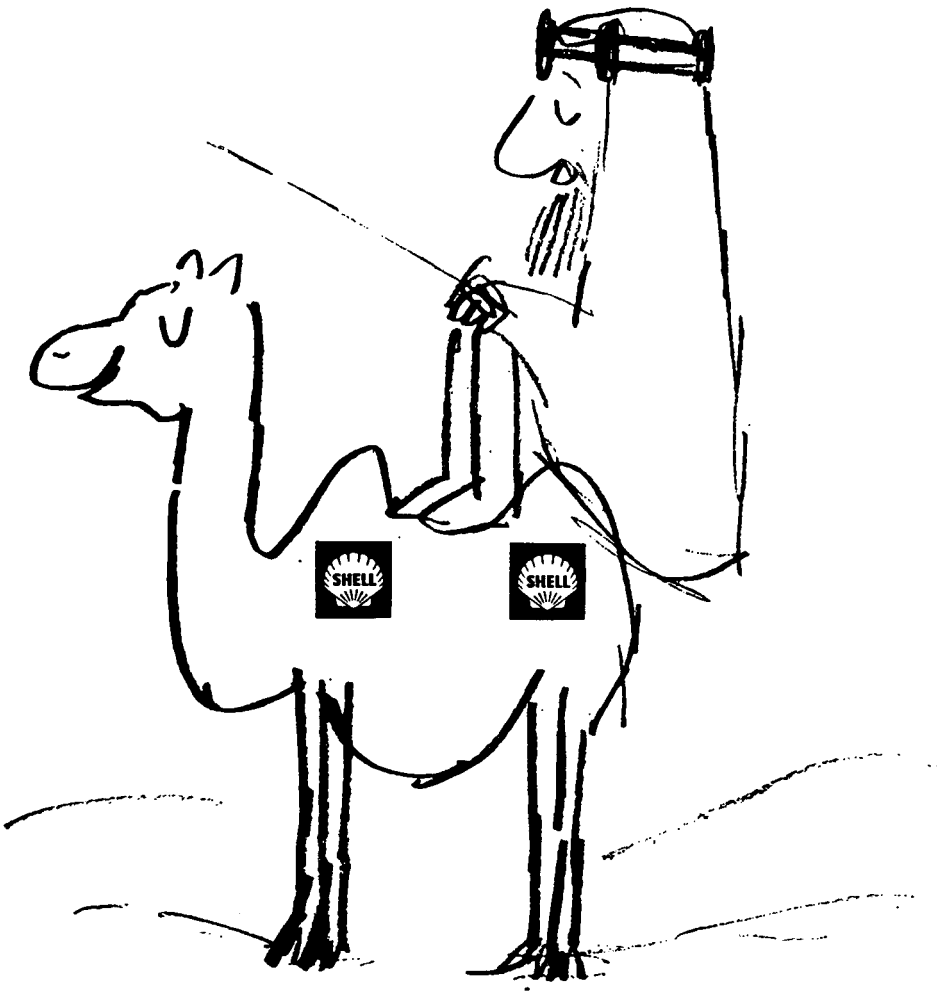

Shell Songs of Araby

My patch of desert, said the Sheik,
Is doing rather well;
My camel kicked a bump last week—
That bump was full of Shell.

GO WELL SHELL GO SHELL

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ERICH KUBY
Sieg! Sieg!

KURT KUSENBERG
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